OF SINNES

Of { Weakneſſe, / Wilfulneſſe:

And appendant to it,

A Paraphraſticall explication of two difficult Texts, *Heb.* 6. and *Heb.* 10.

Συγγνώμων ὁ τῷ ἁμαρτεῖν ἀνθρωπείως λήψονται, *Thucid. l.* 3.

By Henry Hammond D. D.

LONDON,
Printed in the yeere 1646.

OF

SINNES

Volcanoes,

Perpendicular exploration of two

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OF SINNES OF

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THe *ſecond Covenant* being that by which we are now all either *juſtified* or *condemned*, and the *condition* of that, in reſpect of the *facienda*, being *ſincere* not *exact obedience*, not the *not ſinning* at all, but the *not ſinning wilfully after our receiving the knowledge of the truth*, *Heb.* 10. 26. (which though it ſeeme to damne all *irreverſibly* that *ſin wilfully* after *converſion*, yet ſure is to be underſtood according to the *ἐπιείκεια* of the Goſpell, unleſſe he doe *repent* and returne *ſincerely* unto God againe, for whoſoever doth ſo, there is certaine *mercy* by other places made over to him in *Chriſt*, and what is the full *importance* of that place will anon be explicated) It will be an enquiry though of ſome *difficulty*, yet of as great *uſe* and *neceſſity* as any one other in all Divinity, to ſearch what ſinnes there are, for which *mercy* is to be had under the *Goſpell*, and for what not. For that ſome men are *damned*, and not all finally *ſaved*, there is no doubt, and yet as little there ought to be, that this is for *ſinne* that one man is *guilty* of, and tother *not*; from whence it followes that ſeeing no man is *guiltleſſe* of ſinne, ſome *degrees* or ſorts there muſt be of that *guilt* in *one*, which are not in *another*, and according to thoſe *different degrees*, (though every of them be of *it ſelfe* or *without Chriſt*, or by the *tenour* of the *firſt Covenant damning*, yet) under the *Goſpell* or *ſecond Covenant*, the adjudging of men to *heaven* or *hell* is proportioned. *Sect.* 1.

Sect. 2. From all which this results, that some *kinds*, or *sorts*, or *degrees of sinning*, or more plainely, some *states of sinners*, are under the Gospell *damning*, some are *not*; some *reconcileable* with a *good* estate, some *not*; some for which there is *sure mercy* in Christ, some for which there is as *certainely no mercy*; for though the *mercy* of God be *infinite*, and so unfathomable by our finite wits, yet when he hath in the *Gospell* defin'd how farre his *mercy* shall *extend*, and beyond what termes it shall not, 'twill be no insolence to affirme, that God will not have mercy on any who are not *qualified* according to that *second Covenant* of his, who are not such persons to whom *onely* he hath promised *mercy*, at least if they be such as of whom he hath affirmed [*they shall not have mercy.*]

Sect. 3. Thus farre to justify the *fitnesse*, and *use*, and *necessitie* of this search. Now for *progresse* in it. It will be easie to define in the *generall*. 1. That all sinnes in the world, be they never so great, of what *sort* or *kind* soever, if they be *retracted* with true *repentance*, shall certainly be *forgiven*; (for that any *act* of sin should be *irremissible*, they that affirme doe it on this ground that they that *commit* that act shall never truly *repent*, implying that if they did *repent*, it would be *remissible*) and in this the onely difficulty will bee, 1 What *true repentance* is: And 2. Whether that be *necessary* to the obtaining *pardon* for *every* sinne.

Sect. 4. To the first, I answer, that true *repentance* is a *change*, a *through change of mind*, (called in the *Scripture*, and the ordinary style of *Divines*, the *new creature*, being *regenerate*, *conversion*, *spirituall resurrection*, *forsaking of sinne*, *mortification*, *habituall sanctification*, *sincere*, *faithful resolution of new life*, *reformatiō*, *amendment*, μετάνοια, as it superaddes to μετ' μέλεια μετάθεσις τῶν νοῦ, μετ' χρημάτισμος) and what ever doth not amount to thus much is not *true saving repentance*, to which the *promises* or mercies of *Christ* doe appertaine. And so consequently many specious pretenders to that Title are excluded. Such are bare sorrow for sinne, such the *votum pœnitentiæ*, the wishing they were penitent, such a bare *warring* of the *law of the mind against the law of the members*, whil'st we are *carried captive to the law of sinne*; and many the like.

Sect. 5. To the *second*, I must answer by distinguishing the *equivocalnesse* of the question. For the meaning of it may be, 1. Whether *amendment*, or *forsaking*, or *overcoming* every *particular* sinne be *necessa-*

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ry to the obtaining of *pardon* for that *ſinne*, whether it be of *infirmity* or otherwiſe: and if that be meant, I anſwer, No. For that ſome ſinnes are of that nature, that as long as we have this *mortall infirme fleſh* about us, we can never hope to be *rid of* them to *get victory* over them: ſuch as for which the *ſacrifices* were appointed to be offered under the *law*, and for which *Chriſts ſacrifice* once offered is a perfect *expiation*; and theſe by the tenour of the *ſecond Covenant*, or through the *mercy* of God in *Chriſt* ſhall never bee *imputed* to the *penitent ſinner*; I meane to him who hath *amended* all others, and *humbled* himſelfe before *God*, and *beſought* his mercy in *Chriſt*, and by *faith laid* hold of it for theſe, which though he labour againſt them *ſincerely*, he cannot throughly *amend* or *overcome*.

But if the meaning be, ſecondly, Whether the *actuall amending* of all his knowne ſinnes which conſequently may by the Chriſtian be amended, be required neceſſarily to make a man capable of the *pardon* even of his ſinnes which cannot be *amended*; I anſwer, that it is very probable to be ſo. Becauſe *Chriſts ſufferings* ſeeme not be *advantageous* (at all, not ſo much as to the waſhing away of *humane frailties*) to any but thoſe who *are in Chriſt*, *i.e.* to *new creatures*, who alone are ſo; however that will not bee a materiall ſcruple, though it ſhould be left *diſputable*, as long as this other propoſition be taken for infallible (which is ſo) that *except we repent we ſhall all periſh*, *i. e.* that he that hath not forſaken all *wilfull* ſinnes, ſhall (whether for his *wilfull* ſinnes onely, or his *wilfull and frailties* both together, it matters not) be certainly *condemned*. *Sect.* 6.

By the anſwering of theſe two *queſtions* ſo much hath been gained, as that we may make another *generall reſolution*, and define ſecondly, that ſome *ſinnes* are *reconcileable* with a true *penitent*, *convert*, *regenerate eſtate*, others are *not*. And conſequently ſome not *deſtructive* under the *ſecond Covenant*, though others are. What theſe are in *generall* will alſo in the third place be eaſily defined. Sinnes of *infirmity* are *reconcileable*, *wilfull ſinnes* are not. *Sect.* 7.

Vnder *infirmities* I containe all ſorts that are uſually reduced to that head, and which have beene briefly mentioned in another diſcourſe; Whether thoſe that proceed from any not *culpable defect* of my *underſtanding*, as ſinnes of *ignorance*, or from ſome preſent *Sect.* 8. *Of Conſcience.*

ſent *prevailing temptation*, which though I uſe all meanes in my power againſt it, I cannot *overcome*; or from ſome *advantage taken* by Satan, &c. in the aſſaulting me either on *the ſuddaine*, when I have not *time*, to uſe thoſe meanes which I might otherwiſe uſe which we call *ſuddaine ſurreption*; or from the *frequency* or *repetition* or almoſt *continuedneſſe* of the *temptation*, which when I have *repell'd* it never ſo often, *returnes* againe, ſo that if ever my *watch* be *intermitted* (which conſidering our *humane frailty* it is though not *logically*, yet *morally impoſſible*, but it ſhould ſome time or other) I ſhall infallibly fall, (which we uſe to call ſinnes of *dayly incurſion*) or from the levity and undiſcernibleneſſe of the matter, or from any other *principle*, which by that meaſure of grace that God *affords* me, (or if I be not *culpably wanting* to my ſelfe in *neglecting* the uſe of the means preſcribed he is *ready* to *afford* me) I am not able to reſiſt. Suppoſing al this while that 'tis not upon ſome former *wilfull ſinne* of mine that God by way of *puniſhment* withdrawes this *grace neceſſary* to the *reſiſting* of it; for if it be ſo, then though it may truly be ſaid, I cannot now *reſiſt* that *ſinne* for want of that *grace* ſo *withdrawne* by God, yet will not this paſſe for a ſinne of *infirmity*.

Sect. 9. On the other ſide under the name of *Wilfull ſinnes* I meane not all *willingly* committed, or *voluntary* ſinnes, (for all ſin as far as it is *ſinne* is *voluntary*, and therefore ſinnes of *infirmity* are *voluntary*) but all that are not excuſable by any of thoſe former titles of *infirmity*, or all that are not included under ſome of thoſe heads.

Sect. 10. Thus farre in the way of generall defining there is no great *difficulty*. That begins to ſhew it ſelfe when we come to the καθ' ἕκαστον or particular, to mention what ſinnes in *ſpecie*, or *individuo*, what *ſorts* of ſin or *acts* of thoſe ſorts, are ſinnes of *infirmity*, what not; And this is indeed an *inſuperable* difficulty, 1. Becauſe one man hath more *knowledge*, more *quickneſſe* of underſtanding, and alſo more *grace* then another, and ſo that ſinne in *ſpecie*, or *individuo*, that *ſort* or *particular act* of ſinne, which he hath power to *reſiſt* and *overcome*, that other man that hath *leſſe power*, hath not *power* to *overcome*; and if ſo, twill be an *infirmity* in him, though in tother tis not. 2. Becauſe any *ſpecificall ſinne* comes backed with more *temptations* (and ſo makes a more forcible *impreſſion* upon the *will*) at *one* time then *another*; & conſequently though it were not

not above his *strength* at *one* time, yet at *another* time it may. Yea and *thirdly*, because the same man is at one time more *able* to *resist* and *overcome*, then he himselfe at some *other* time, as of a man in state of *desertion* it is cleare, as also when either by *drunkennesse* or any other *culpable extravagancy* (through *rage* or *lust* not resisted in the first motion) the man is utterly debauched from his *naturall* and *spirituall* strength, and no way able to resist *those temptations*, which at another time he would scorne to be *captivated* with.

But these two causes will not be very pertinent to the businesse in hand: because, as is supposed in them, that which brought this *weakenesse* upon the man, was some *culpable*, nay *wilfull act*, (or *yeelding* of his) committed then *against strength*, (though now that *strength* be not sufficient against the consequent assault) and so no way apt to *excuse* the sinne, that it primarily *betrayed* him to. But if the case be set of some *innocent accident* which causes this *alteration*, then it will be pertinent to the thing which I now affirme, (to wit the evidencing the *difficulty* of such particular defining καθέκαστον) as we know a man in time of *sadnesse* will be able to reject some *jolly* proposalls, which yet in time of *mirth* (supposing that *moderate* and *harmelesse*, and as perfectly *sinlesse* in it selfe, as that contrary *sadnesse*) he will not perhaps be *able*, nay, as *Hippocrates* affirmes in his tract περὶ ὑδ: ἀερ: τόπων, one *aire* or *place* may strongly *incline* a man to one whether *virtue* or *sinne*, which another doth not, & where the *inclinations* are *stronger* or *weaker*, there we know the *strength* being in degree supposed the *same* must prove unproportionable to the one though not the other, able and sufficient to *resist* the *weaker*, though unsufficient to subdue the *stronger inclination*. *Sect.* 11.

To come yet more clearely to that which is of every dayes experience. Suppose a man a little *drowzy* at one houre (which *drowzinesse* at that time particularly, is not a *sinne*, but a *naturall* desire of *sleep*, which is *natures* due *debt*) and suppose him throughly *awaked*, and out of that fit of *drowzinesse* at another time; and then suppose that the same *proposall* be made to him at both those times, it may very probably be *received* at *one* time, and *rejected* at *another*; nay, if the *proposall* be an undertaking *destructive* of his present *desire* of *sleep*, it may easily be affirmed that in that *drowzy* fit he hath no *strength* to *resist* it, though at *another* time he hath. The *Sect.* 12.

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reaſon is, becauſe *ſleepe* being a *ligation* of the faculties, *drowzineſſe* likewiſe is ſo in ſome *degree*, and the *want* of that *degree* may diſable the *underſtanding* or *upper ſoule* from *repreſenting* ſtrongly enough at that time, that which at another time it ſhall be able to *repreſent* ſo ſtrongly, that the contrary *propoſalls* of the ſenſe ſhall not dare to appeare before it. From whence I conceive it followes, that if the *propoſall*, ſuppoſed in this cauſe, be a *ſinfull propoſall*, that ſinne committed by that *drowzy* man will be a ſinne of *infirmity*, which if it were committed by the ſame man broad awake, would be a ſinne againſt *ſtrength*, and ſo a *wilfull* ſinne. From whence yet the man ſo *deceived* once or twice ought to receive *admonition* that hereafter, if any *weighty* matter, wherein his *duty* be concerned, be *repreſented* to him in the like *poſture*, he will before he *conſents* or *refuſes*, *diſcutere ſomnum*, *ſhake off ſleepe*, that he may not be ſo unfit a *judge*, or if he find his owne *weakeneſſe* ſuch that he cannot, he will appoint ſome body elſe to awake him throughly, that he be not thus conſtantly *impotent*; For if he doe not uſe theſe meanes to recover his *ſtrength*, when he is *aware* of them, it may ceaſe to be an *infirmity*.

Sect. 13. From all which as we have evidenced the *difficulty* of the problem applyed to *particular individuall* ſinnes or perſons, ſo we conceive our diſcourſe to have given ſome *hints* which will be uſefull toward this *diſcovery*. Eſpecially this, that any ſinne committed by him that hath at that time *ſtrength* or *grace* to reſiſt it, or whoſe wilfull fault it hath beene, that he hath not that *ſufficient* ſtrength (as if either ſome former *waſting ſinne* of his, whether *act* or *habit*, have *grieved the holy Spirit of God*, and provoked *God* to *withdraw* it from him, which he would not otherwiſe have done, or if by the uſe of ſome meanes beforehand he might have prevented the ſtrength of that *impreſſion*, or better fortified himſelfe, or by *uſe* of ſome other *meanes*, as of *prayer*, *&c.* at the preſent he might yet get *ſtrength*, or *remove* the *tempter*, and he make *uſe* of none of theſe *meanes* through *ſenſuality* or *ſluggiſhneſſe*) is a *wilfull* ſinne, (not a ſinne of infirmity) to that man at that time.

Sect. 14. And ſo though we have no other *particular* way of *defining*, yet this we have, that will ſtand any man in as good ſteed for the examining *himſelfe*, and his owne guilts, or any *confeſſor* (that hath received

received of his *conſitent* an exact account not only of the *action*, but the circumſtances of the *action*, his *qualifications* at that *time*, and the particular *vigor of the aſſault*) as particular definitions concerning this, or that ſinne *univerſim* would.

As *for example*, if I would know whether any *act* of mine owne, (or being a *confeſſor*) of my *penitent*, be a *wilfull* ſinne or no, I muſt firſt inquire, whether in that *point* of time, when being *tempted* I *committed* it, my *underſtanding* or *upper ſoul*, and the *ſpirit of God* in me did move me more, or as *ſtrongly* not to doe it, as the *fleſh* did to the *commiſſion*, allowing farther ſomewhat of *grace* to *incline* the will, or of the *underſtanding* to *move* it as much in proportion as the *will* ſince the fall is naturally *inclined* to the *carnall appetite*, (as you know when one *Scale* is heavier *of it ſelfe* then the other, or by ſome *default* in the *beame* one is more apt to *turne* then the other, you muſt, if you would even the ballances and make an *æquilibrium*, put *more weight* in the *Scale* that is apt to fly up) Or if this be an *obſcure* operation, why then I muſt deſire thee to examine whether at that time thy *Spirit* or *Conſcience* told thee, this was not to be done, and that on paine not only of *Gods diſpleaſure* but alſo of thy *eternall damnation*, (which muſt certainly be farre greater motives of *determent* even to *fleſh* and *bloud*, then any *pleaſure* the fleſh can repreſent, can be *allective* to the contrary) and if thou findeſt it did, and yet for all this thy *will* conſented to the *fleſh* in its propoſall, then this is a ſinne againſt *ſtrength*, a *wilfull ſinne*, and not of *infirmity*. *Sect.* 15.

But if thy *conſcience*, or *ſpirit* or *upper ſoule*, at that time did not this, then 'tis to be reſolved on, that it failed to doe the *duty* of a watchman, and if it did ſo, then my ſecond inquiry will be, From whence that *failing* of thy *ſpirit* aroſe? (for if it be *awake* and diſpoſed as it ſhould be, (and as even yet by *grace* it is prepared to be, if we make *uſe* of that *grace*) it will *ſpeake* and *admoniſh* us, and that not in *words* which are ſubject to *miſunderſtanding*, but in *ſenſe* which therefore we cannot *conceive*) Whether, firſt, from Gods juſt *deſertion* the *puniſhment* of ſome *former* ſin, or ſecondly, from ſome preſent *actuall ſinne* of mine upon me at that time, as *drunkenneſſe*, *crapula*, &c. or thirdly, from ſome *habit* which I have, by former *acts* of the ſinne which I am now tempted to, *contracted*, to the *blinding* of my *underſtanding*, or *grieving* *Sect.* 16.

of the *spirit*, or *stifling* that sinne, that it shall be able to passe downe *hastily* and escape the search of my *understanding*; In all these cases, the *originall* of that failing being sinfull, the *failing* it selfe will not yeeld any *excuse* or compleat *apology*, but the sinne will still remaine a wilfull sinne.

Sect. 17. If none of all these be found chargeable upon thee, as the *originall* of that *failing* and *negative productive* of that sinne, then I can as yet thinke of but one inquiry more, whether thirdly, thy *understanding* and the *grace* of God in it, being thus layed asleepe as it were, by some *naturall*, *sinfull*, or at least *invincible* and so *excusable frailty*, or else (as in a *drowsy* fit) not perfectly awake, there be not some *meanes prescribed* and presented to thee by God, which if thou hadst used, thou mightest have *wakened* thy *understanding*, or *fortified* thy *will*, or *weakened* the *temptation*: and if so, and thou hast, through *negligence*, or *confidence*, spirituall *security* or *pride*, omitted to make *use* of them, then will this still amount to a *wilfull* sinne or a sinne against *strength*; as when the *Lunatique* Son was *brought to the Disciples* of Christ, and the Text saith *Matt.* 17. 20. *they could not cast* the evill spirit *out*, and Christ gives the reason why they could not, *because*, saith he, *this kinde goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting*, Christ yet chargeth them with *infidelity* almost unsufferable, (*O faithlesse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?*) because there being such *meanes* to *enable* them to doe the worke, they *neglected* those *meanes*, & so only by that *neglect* became *unable*. The style of *faithlesse* in that place gives us yet a more perfect notion of a *wilfull sinne*, then hitherto we have arrived to, that it is not only that which is against *naturall conscience*, or *spirituall infusions*, but also that which is particularly against *faith*, *i.e.* comes to be committed by neglecting the *use* of some *meanes*, which the *word of Christ*, or the *Scripture* offers and prescribes to us, especially if by our former *sayings* we have discerned the *want* we have of such *helpes* or *auxiliaries*. For in this respect of directing to such *meanes of victory* Faith is said to be the *overcoming the world*, 1 *John* 5. 4. as well as in presenting us with the *promises* and terrors of the Gospell.

Sect. 18. Further yet in the fourth place, if at the time of commission of the sinne thou canst truely say, 'twas not in thy power to *resist* it, because

because of the *strength* of the *temptation* so hurrying thee, as not to give thee *leasure* to *judge* or *deliberate*, (which may seeme to intitle that action to the title of *infirmity*) thou must then enquire whether thy *yeilding* (*voluntarily* from contemplation of the *pleasure* &c.) to some *entrances* and *beginnings* of that sinne, whether *morose thoughts*, or somewhat further then that, hath so made the *temptation* so *strong*, or *thee* so *weake*; which thou wilt discerne by this enquiry, whether before those *morose thoughts* &c. were entertained, thou wert not *able* to make *resistance* to the *actuall sinne*, and then, if so thou wert *able*, may actually didst, and only the intervenience of those *preparatory yeeldings* did betray thee to this *impotence*, and it was in thy *power* (by *naturall* or *supernaturall strength* already had, or *prayer* either as it hath a promise of more *strength*, or as it is an excellent meanes of *diversion*) to have *resisted* those *beginnings*, when thou didst *yeild*, then full is this a *wilfull sinne*, or *sinne against strength*.

As for other sinnes more clearely and immediately against *naturall conscience*, against *Faith*, (or directions of the Scripture for the *overcoming the world*) against *supernaturall strength or grace*, as contumacious stubborne *presumptuous* sinnes, there will be little scruple to any man, or cause to keepe him from *pronouncing* of, and charging on them the crime of *wilfulnesse*, and concluding (without reall *change*) the certaine *damnableness* of them even under Christ. I say particularly, *presumptuous sinnes*, when (*presuming* that *Gods* mercy in Christ is either *unlimited*, and may belong to any the most *unreformed*, or that it is *decreed absolutely* to some *persons*, without any respect to *qualifications* or demeanures, to *Saul* the *persecutor*, as well as *Paul the Apostle*) the sinner runnes *comfortably* and *alacriously* on, without any *regret* of *conscience*: the doing so is certainely no sinne of *infirmity*, because though some *errour* may be pretended for his so doing, and that *errour* seeme apt to lend him *excuse*; *Sect.* 19.

Yet first, *errours*, that are not *simple errours*, but bring *vitious* life after them, are not *excusable* (because not *invincible*) *errours*, the rule of the *agenda* or *duties* of life being so *cleare* in the *Scripture* and in the *heart*, that no man can be *invincibly ignorant of that*, *Rom.* 10. 8, 9. and *Deut.* 30. 14. The *word* that is now *commanded* is not hid or impossible, or like *fetching Christ from hea-* *Sect.* 20.

ven, or the *grave*, a thing quite out of our power, but it is nigh *thee, in thy mouth*, and in *thy heart, that thou mayst doe it*. And secondly, it will be apparent, that even those *errours* on which that *presumption* is built, being simply considered, are demonstrable to be *errours* (*suppositâ fide*) or *to one that acknowledges the Scripture*, because there be so many places in the *Scripture* point-blanke against them, particularly those of the *conditionall promises* every where scattered. Neither *circumcision, &c. but the new creature, but faith consummate by love, but keeping the Commandements of God; Without holinesse no man shall see the Lord; He that confesses and forsakes shall have mercy; He that hath this hope purifies, &c. And having therefore these promises let us cleanse, &c.*

Sect. 21. From what hath beene said, it will be more then probable, that all acts of *fornication, adultery, &c.* (which I shall suppose never to be actually committed without some space of *deliberation*, or if they be, then I meane those other wherein that *deliberation* interposes) are *wilfull sinnes*, and so also all acts of *drunkennesse*, unlesse when through *ignorance* of the *strength* of the *liquor*, or the *weakenesse* of the *braine*, the man suddainly fall into it by desiring to *quench* his *thirst*, or doe somewhat which is *lawfull*; wherein yet, if after *one* or more *trials* he miscarry the *second* or a *third time*, it will still be a *wilfull* sinne; So also *lying* or speaking that which we know to be *false*, to the *defrauding* and *wronging* of another, or for any *vainglorious* designe; So againe, any sinne of *oppression, injustice, &c.* or generally all those where there is any *time* of *advice* and *deliberation*; For where ever that liberty is, there is supposed an *ability* and *readinesse* in the *upper soule* of a *Christian* to present *arguments* for obedience to God, stronger then any the *devill*, or the *world*, or *flesh*, can offer for the contrary. As for *killing* a man, though the *Law* of the Land is wont to distinguish of *wilfull* and *not wilfull murther*, yet to any man in his *wits*, the *stabbing* his neighbour (or using any other such *meanes* as may *probably* take away his *life*) would seeme so *strange*, that I cannot conceive but his *spirit* should be able to deterre him from it in that space, which is required that any such *weapon* may be *prepared*; For if it be said, his *rage* doth *gag* or silence his *spirit*; I shall answer, that the *raising* of his *rage* to that pitch was not in a *minute*, but grew upon him by *degrees*, and then there was *time* and *meanes* to prevent

vent that *growth*, which he that did not make uſe of will hardly be able thereby to *excuſe* or *extenuate* the ſubſequent ſinne.

For *ſwearing* alſo I know not how in ordinary diſcourſe or in any caſe (*extra cauſas juramenti legitimas, where it is ſuppoſed perfectly lawfull*) it can be made a ſinne of *infirmity*; for *in communication* Chriſt's words are ſo plaine [*But I ſay unto you, Sweare not at all*, and particularly, *Let your communication be yea, yea, &c.* for *whatſoever is more*, is ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ *from the evill one*] that it would amaze any man to ſee that it ſhould become an *ornament* or tolerable part of a *Chriſtians dialect*. And if it be in *rage*, then I dare ſay, that either that man hath formerly in ſome meaſure enured his tongue to ſwearing, or not ſo ſtrictly made *conſcience* of an *oath*, as *Chriſt's precept* obligeth him; for he that never ſwore, will not in *impatience* probably fall out into thoſe formes of ſpeech that he never *uſed*, (but alwaies *vowed* and reſolved againſt) but into ſome other which he hath been more *uſed* to, or which he could heare in others with leſſe *horrour* and *deteſtation*, or which were a more naturall *remedy* for that *paſſion*. And if you marke it, that which *rage* doth is onely to *blind* the *underſtanding*, (and ſo to *ſteale* out any *proper effects* of *rage*, as *preſuming* of their *impunity*, or not *conſidering* the contrary *danger*) but not to *hurry* us to the commiſſion of any or *every* other ſinne *indifferently*, and at a venture. And why a *rage* ſhould caſt one upon uſing *Gods name* in *oathes*, (which before he had never *phanſied* for any uſe but in his prayers) any more then on many other unheard of ſinnes, I am ſo farre from conceiving any reaſon, that I muſt conclude it impoſſible, unleſſe it proceed from the being *uſed* in ſome meaſure to that ſinne, or having a more *favourable* eaſy opinion of it. And yet after all this, that *rage* it ſelfe being ſo *Vn-Chriſtian* a thing, which we are ſo *obliged* to *prevent*, (and if in time it be not *prevented*, will not *alwaies* paſſe for an *infirmity* in a Chriſtian) will be unable to *patronize* or *excuſe* any ſuch one *oath*, which that puts into our mouthes; but on the other ſide, the obſerving that my *rage* hath made me ſweare, muſt in any reaſon give me ſo *ſtrict* a *watch* over my ſelfe in time of *provocation*, as never to let looſe into a *rage*, which proves ſo inconvenient and ſo *complicated* a ſinne unto me; as he that finds himſelfe *quarrelſome* in his *drinke*, hath the greateſt obligation to *temperance* of any. As *Sect.* 22.

for any other *meanes* that bring on *swearing*, *custome*, *pride*, *ostentation*, *ἀναπόφευκτος λόγος*, *filling up the discourse*, none of these will *excuse* it from a *wilfull* sinne; especially considering the *naturall intrinsecall sinfulnesse* of that sinne, that were it not for some accidentall or extrinsecall advantage, *evill example*, (which if it had been a *good one*, we could easily enough have *rejected* and *not imitated*.) or *custome locall* or *personall*, or that other of the *company* we are used to, scarce any man that heares *swearing* forbidden by Christ, will *discerne* himselfe to have any *carnall invitation* to sweare, no not in time of *rage*.

Sect. 23. The same I thinke may be defined of all the grosse *outward acts* of sinne, or *sinnes in the members*; because for the *acting* of them, over and above the *consent* of the *will*, some *space* is necessarily required, wherein the *spirit* or upper soule, if it be about us, will be able and ready to *interpose*, if it may be hearkned to, (which me thinkes is intimated by the *Turkes* in a custome of theirs, who when they meane to give themselves liberty to be *drunke*, use to make a great *noise*, which they say is a *warning* to their *soule* to retire into some *extreame part of the body*, that it may not be *spectator* or *Censor* of this their *beastiality*.) And if it be thus *driven* away, *gagg'd*, or not *hearkened* to, then that is a sinne against *strength*, a *wilfull sinne*. Which perhaps was Saint *Iames* his observation, when he said, *Sinne being perfected bringeth forth death*. For the *conception of lust* precedent signifies certainly the *consent* or conjunction of the *will* with the *carnall appetite*, when in the *moving* (or *canvasse* for that *consent*) of the *upper soule* on one side, and of the *lower soule* or *carnall* part on tother, the *will* which is thus courted by both, yeelds to the *second*, and so they joyne in *mutuall embraces*, from whence, saith the Apostle, *sinne is brought forth*, that very *consent* of the *will* to the *sensuall faculty*, being *formally* sinne without, or before the *acting* of it; but this perhaps a *sinne of infirmity*, as the case may be (for *universim* or *almaies* it is not; but very often *wilfull* and *damning*, though it never come to *act*) whereas if this sinne (of *infirmity* while it was onely in the *conception*, *i. e. consent* of the *will*) come to *birth* (*i.e. actuall commission*) or *perfection*, and fitnesse for *birth*, (which requires some space, and time) it may justly be said a sinne against *strength*, & so in the very *Covenant of grace* a fatall *mortiferous* sin.

And

And therefore though before we said that the same sinne in *specie*, might be but an *infirmity* in one, and yet a *wilfull* sinne in another, yet this *affirmation* will need this caution to interpret it, that the meaning of it be onely this, that a sinne that is *onely* an *infirmity* in one, may by some meanes of *aggravation* become *wilfull* in another, but not *è contra*, that that which, upon some grounds or supposition of *strength* common to all men, may be *in universum* deemed a *wilfull sinne*, can by any meanes be *extenuated* into an *infirmity*. That which I now say, I meane of any grosse *outward* act, or *habit* of sinne, because in these I conceive there is some *mora* or *stay*, wherein the *spirit* may be *advised* with; and then that being supposed in good *health* or *regenerate* state will not faile to suggest sufficient arguments against that sinne, and so be a meanes to *retract* that *sudden* stolen *consent*, before it come to *act*, at least to *habit*; Or if it be not it selfe without *auxiliaries* able to combat with the *temptation*, yet it will out of the *word of God* be able to direct us to some *aid*, which being called in, will either improve us to a competent *strength*, or help to *disarme* and *weaken* the *temptation*, which we shall find by *trying*, and making *use* of those meanes; be they our *prayers* either for *grace* in time of need, or as I said *prayer* as a meanes of *divertisement*, or be they *fasting*, *vigilance*, &c. or be it but a *tempting* to do our best, for this is very ordinary to observe in our selves, that (when we put our selves to it, and *do our best*) we prove able to doe farre more, then ever we dreamt, we had been able. And this is very remarkable, whether you consider it, as a truth in *morality*, wherein it hath been observed that *necessity* or *extreame* danger enables men to doe *miracles*, which when they are *past* they are *amazed* to see them done by them, (as *Hierocles* excellently shewes on that *golden Pythagorean* ὑπεύχιον, δύναμις δὲ ἀνάγκης ἔγγυθι ναίει) or as a *truth of Scripture*, wherein there be many *promises* that God will *aid* when we *fight*, cooperate when we work, *assist* when we endeavour, and not be *wanting* to them which are not first *culpably wanting to* themselves. Sect. 24.

Having said thus much of *wilfull sinnes* (for the *disabusing* of those who are over apt to flatter themselves that their sinnes are *infirmities* and no more, and therefore sure of their *pardon* in *Christ*, though *continued* in, or not retracted by *particular repentance*) I shall Sect. 25.

ſhall not thinke this diſcourſe chargeable or accuſable of any dangerous or hurtfull *ſeuerity*, by being apt to drive men to *deſpaire*. 1. Becauſe it is knowne in Scripture and acknowledged by all, and now confeſt by this paper, that there is a *tabula poſt naufragium*, a *plancke after ſhipwracke*, *repentance*, as it implyes *forſaking*, and *change of mind*, and the *working* of that in every ſuch ſinner, is the thing that all this while I intend, and there is no way poſſible for the *working* it, but this, by repreſenting the *danger*, if it be not wrought, which he, that takes all his ſinnes for *infirmities*, will never be *convinc'd* of, while he ſo thinks. And 2. becauſe the *deſpaire* that is *dangerous* is that which is contrary to the *purifying hope*, to that *hope* that ſets upon *amendment*, by aſſuring that there is mercy to be had on *ſuch termes*; And as any other *hope* is but *groundleſſe confidence*, ſo any other *deſpaire* but that which makes us *give over* amending, is in ſome reſpects a very *uſefull*, at leaſt not very *noxious*, *deſpaire: uſefull*, if it ſet us on *mending*, when without it we would not; as in caſe of *deſpaire* or diſtruſt onely of *our preſent condition*, in reſpect of our *preſent ſins*, but not of the *future*, becauſe there is yet place for *repentance*: or *not noxious*, I meane not ſo farre, as to *damne*, or do any thing but *deprive* us of ſome comfortable *aſſurance* here, (the *want* of which, if we *want* nothing elſe, will never *prejudice* any mans *ſalvation*, whatever they thinke, that take this *aſſurance* to be *Faith*) as in caſe of *dying* without all *hope* of Heaven, when that no *hope* proceeds onely from an *amazing ſight* of former ſinnes, which though we have *ſincerely* forſaken, yet none but God infallibly ſees that we have, and our ſelves out of an *humble lowly conceit* of all our owne actions, (our *repentance* particularly *undervalued* by us) thinke and *reſolve* we have not. For ſure if God ſee we have *changed ſincerely*, and ſo there be *aſſurance reſpectu objecti*, in *reſpect* of *the object*, tis an *errour* in us to thinke we have not; (from whence proceeds the *non-aſſurance* of the *Subject*) and this errour if it be onely in the *underſtanding*, and produce no *evill* life, will ſure *damne* none that ſhould not otherwiſe be *damned*.

Sect. 26. For whereas it may be *objected*, that he may ſeeme to want that *affiance* in Chriſt for ſalvation, which is a *ſaving neceſſary grace*, I anſwer, that that *affiance* (that is ſo) is the *rolling my ſelfe on Chriſt for ſalvation*, and *if I periſh, I periſh*, the *denying* and *renouncing*

nouncing all *truſt* in my ſelfe in my owne *righteouſneſſe, faith, repentance*, my owne any thing, but only *Chriſt*, and God's *mercy* in *him*; not the beleeving my *perſonall election*, or that I ſhall be ſaved what ever my ſinnes be, and how *unreformed* ſoever. For beſides that this is in an *unreformed* ſinner (ſpeaking of *wilfull* ſins) were the beleeving *of a Lye*, becauſe there is really no mercy or *Salvation* for ſuch; beſides this I ſay there is no obligation or command in Scripture, which can be thought to make it *duty* or *neceſſary* for any to beleeve himſelfe a true *pœnitentiary* even when he is ſo. 'Tis true we are *commanded* to *prove* our *worke &c. Gal.6.4. i.e.* to ponder and ballance every *action* we take in hand whether it will beare the δοκιμὴ *tryall* of the *teſt* or no, and this we are *incouraged* by that which follows, that we ſhall have καύχημα μόνον εἰς ἑαυτὸν *boaſting only in our ſelves*. But then, firſt, this *precept of trying* is not *a precept of knowing or beleeving*. Secondly, this *trying his owne* worke, ſignifies the direct act of conſcience, the doing each *action* with a good *conſcience*, but belongs not to the *reflexive act of Conſcience* upon the *whole life paſt*, or if it doe, requires not, that every man ſhould at every minute of his life *beleeve or know infallibly* that this *ſtate* is *good*, and ſhall be ſo to the *end*. Thirdly, the *boaſting* there is ſet only in oppoſition to *boaſting over another* (as appeareth by that which followes v. 5. *for every man ſhall beare his owne burthen, i.e. another* mans being *worſe* then you will doe you no good) to judging well of our ſelves by that deceitfull way of *comparing* our ſelves with thoſe that are worſe then wee: and therfore, fourthly, 'tis obſervable that it is not ſaid by way of *promiſe* ἕξει καύχημα εἰς ἑαυτόν, *he ſhal have matter of boaſting in himſelfe*, (for ſure the beſt man living hath little of that) but εἰς ἑαυτὸν μόνον, *only in himſelfe*, all the *boaſting* or *comfort* that he hath ſhall be in himſelfe and in the uprightneſſe of his owne *conſcience*, as that is oppoſed to comparing or comforting himſelfe (as the *Phariſee* with the *Publican*) becauſe others are worſe then hee. And ſo ſtill the *want* of this *aſſurance* being the utmoſt *inconvenience* that this doctrine can poſſibly at the worſt view of it bring upon him, this will amount no higher then ſome preſent *diſcomfort*, which will be recompenced abundantly by the *gaines* it brings with it of being *diſdeceived* and brought timely and happily to repentance.

Sect. 27. The ſhort is, let theſe ſinnes which thou ſeeſt *improved*, perhaps beyond thine expectation into *wilfull ſinnes*, be *ſincerely reſolved* and *laboured* againſt, and all meanes *uſed* for the *performing* that *reſolution*, & then if by any unſuperable weakeneſſe of thine thou faileſt in *performing* it or *overcomming* them, perhaps I ſhall *retract* my doctrine in ſome part as it is appliable to thee; or if I doe not, be *confident* I have done thee no conſiderable *injury*, though I ſhould have deceived thee in ſome particular; I am ſure I am not guilty to my ſelfe of any *deſigne* to do ſo, and therefore I hope my *errour* ſhall not be a culpable one, becauſe *error amoris, an errour of kindneſſe*, or *care*, or *love*, in that I deſired to make heaven as ſure to thee as I could, though not to make thee *over ſure* of *heaven*.

Sect. 28. Somewhat being thus ſet downe by way of *character* to know *wilfull* ſinnes by, we ſhall ſuppoſe that that will alſo be *helpefull* to the *defining* what *ſinnes of infirmity are*. For of that no ſcruple will be made to affirme, that what ever ſinne is not *wilfull* in any of the former deſcriptions of it, muſt be reſolved to be of *infirmity*; there be no *middle* or third betwixt thoſe two in the *ſecond covenant-account* of ſinnes. By the rule therefore of *contraries* we ſhall beſt proceed. 1. In generall, to define a *ſinne of infirmity*, that which is not againſt *ſtrength* or *grace*, or that which (though we *labour* and *endevour ſincerely* againſt *all ſinne*, and uſe what *meanes* we are *convinc't* will tend to the *overcoming* of ſinne) we yet fall into, either through *humane frailty* alone, or through *Satans cunning*, taking advantage of that our *frailty*.

Sect. 29. As firſt, when (as at firſt we gave hints of reſolution) any *invincible* and ſo *excuſable ignorance* of Gods will in ſome particulars *betray* me to ſome ſinne, (for then my *underſtanding* or *ſpirit* is not of *ſtrength* ſufficient to adviſe me) then the ſinne is of *weakneſſe*, and therefore *Rom.* 14. they that are called the *weake*, *v.* 1. are explained to be they that *lacke knowledge v.* 10. which all they that *have* are called *the ſtrong* through that *Chapter*. Or ſecondly, when the *ſuddainneſſe* of *the aſſault* gives not my *ſpirit* leaſure to repreſent thoſe *perſwaſives* and *determents* which it would doe if it were not ſo *ſurprized*; and ſo for want of thoſe *repreſentations* on that ſide, the preſent *promiſes* of the *temptation* doe *preponderate* and *prevaile* againſt all that is offered to the *contrary*; for as a man that hath *time* to ſet himſelfe upon his *guard* will be

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able to *reſiſt* and *vanquiſh* that enemy which by ſurpriſall *takes*, and bindes & *conquers* him with eaſe, ſo is the will of a man in caſe of *ſuddaine ſurpriſal*; It hath no *leiſure* to make *uſe* of thoſe *ſuccours that reaſon could afford*, if it had *time* to *muſter* them up. And ſo beingmore *weake* at ſuch times then at other, the ſinnes that at ſuch time it *yeelds* to, but would not at another, are *ſinnes of Infirmity*.

For 'tis to be obſerved that the *upper ſoule* moves the *will* not as a *naturall* but *rationall* agent, uſes *ſyllogiſmes* and *arguments* to *perſwade*, hath not that *deſpoticall* power to have it at its *becke* or *nod*, 'tis not by a *Goe and it goeth, and come and it cometh*, (as *Ariſtotle's Philoſophy* ſeemes to ſet it) that what the *underſtanding preſcribes* to be done, the *will muſt* doe; but the courſe is of ſome more *length*. The *underſtanding* muſt *diſpute* and *canvaſſe* it againſt the *carnall appetite*, *anſwer* the *motives* brought by that, and then give *more perſwaſive* ones for the contrary; and then perhaps the underſtanding is otherwiſe *buſy* at that minute when the *temptation* comes, and the *popular carnall argument* that it hath uſed, hath *prevailed* and gotten *conſent* before the *underſtanding* was aware of it, either through preſent *buſineſſe* and inability to *attend* more things at once, or for want of an ἀγχίνοια *ſuddenneſſe of mind* to repreſent preſently the arguments it hath on its ſide, or to find out the *Sophiſmes* ont other. Or however, To *diſpute* it *throughly* and *cleare* all *difficulties*, and indeed (if it be but) to make this one *Syllogiſme*, [the *terrours* of the *Lord* belongs to him that commits ſuch a ſinne as thou art now *tempted* to but that man is *mad* that will upon any carnall *motives* venture upon the *terrours of the Lord*, therefore that man is *mad* that will adventure on that ſinne,] and then to prove and make good againſt the contrary *fallacious* ſuggeſtions of the *fleſh*, *&c.* every part of that *Syllogiſme*, and moreover to bring it home particularly to thee at that time, will require ſome *ſpace*, and that (by the *ſuddainneſſe* and *no warning* of the *temptation*) being not afforded, the *ſpirit* in this caſe is not able to doe its *duty*, and ſo the ſinne will be committed for want of *ſtrength*. For the *want of ſtrength* that eſpecially denominates the ſinne of *infirmity*, is not any want of *bodily ſtrength* (for whatever is committed for want onely of that is a kind of *rape*, *no voluntary* action, nor conſequently any ſinne *ſo much* as of *infirmity*, an *act* or *defect* of the *body*, not of the *will*,

Sect. 30.

and ſo not chargeable upon the *man* which is primarily his *ſoule*, ἡ ψυχή σου, thy ſoule is thou) but of *ſpirituall* or inward *ſtrength*, i.e. of *grace*, and of *motives* and *ſuaſories* to obedience, more *effectuall*, or *operative*, or power full, then any the *world*, or *fleſh*, or *devill* hath to the contrary. And ſeeing theſe arguments are perpetually to be had from every *regenerate Chriſtian's ſpirit*, and the only want is the *non-repreſenting* or *non-producing* of them in time of *neede*, if the caſe ſtands ſo, that by reaſon of the *ſuddaine ſurprizall*, (or which is ſomewhat different) *clancular ſurreption*, when from ſome *indifferent* acts a *ſinne* ſteales on us, as by drinking *one glaſſe* of *wine* I am prepared to a readineſſe to *drinke* a *ſecond*, and perhaps by that ſending up ſome *cloud* to the *underſtanding*, or *warming*, and ſo *emboldning* me, I may be much induced to a *third*, and ſo every *ſtep* make me more unable *not to proceed*) they *cannot* be thus *produced*, this ſinne thus *conſented* to muſt needs be a ſinne of *infirmity* in him that meerly through *ignorance* of the power of *wine* is ſo *betrayed*, though to him that had one ſuch *warning*, and yet thus fals againe as before I ſaid, I cannot be ſo *favourable*.

Sect. 32. Or thirdly, when the *vigilance* and importunate *diligence* and indefatigable *ſiege* of the temptation is ſuch, as that if the man doe not watch with as continued a diligence, the *will* will be taken *unfortified*, and ſo by that *diſadvantage* won to conſent, (as in caſe of *daily incurſion* of any one temptation, or of all ſinnes, ſome at one time, ſome at another, every minute almoſt ſome) then the ſinne that is *committed* meerly thus, may paſſe for a ſinne of *Infirmity*; becauſe though every *aſſault* particularly conſidered be ſuch as that the *ſpirit* might have beene vigilant enough to *prevent* it, yet to be *ſo perpetually* upon the *guard* is *morally impoſſible*; and ſo ſometime to *nod*, and *ſlip*, or *fall* may paſſe uncenſured for an *infirmity*. And therefore when to that which is ſaid truly of the *ſecond Covenant* [that the *condition* of it is *feiſable* becauſe there is now under the Goſpell no more required *ſub periculo animæ*, but to doe what we are enabled to doe, and no man can be unable to doe that] 'tis wont to be *objected* that no man ever *did* all that he is *able* to doe, and therefore though it be *Logically poſſible* to doe ſo, and ſo to performe the condition of the *ſecond* (though not of the *firſt*) *Covenant*, yet 'tis *moraly impoſſible*, i. e. 'tis not to be imagined that ever any man will do it, (& then that will

will be all one in effect with the condition of the *firſt Covenant*, which is acknowledged *utterly impoſſible*.) To this we anſwer, that therefore the *Goſpell* hath made *proviſion* even for theſe *morall impoſſibilities*, and not required the regenerate Chriſtian, *ſub periculo animæ*, to performe alway what ever he is *able* to performe, but indulged ſo much to *humane frailty*, that what ever is *morally conſequent* to that, ſhall be matter of excuſe to us, and ſo particularly to fall ſometimes through daily incurſion of temptation, onely becauſe I doe not (which it cannot be *expected* I ſhould) *watch alwaies*, will be matter of excuſe alſo.

Beſides theſe 3 heads of ſinnes of *infirmity*, ſome others there are, which will not ſo clearely be put under one or ſeverall heads, ſuch as are thoſe that the levity of the matter and that *inadvertence* betrayes us to, (ſuppoſing that that be not *groſſe*, or *affected*, or cauſed by ſome *wilfull ſinne*) for ſome *degree* of this there will be in the moſt *knowing* and moſt *vigilant* man, and ſome ſinnes will *drop* from us by this meanes, which wholly to avoid may be truely ſaid to be above *Humane Power*. *Sect.* 33.

One head of theſe ſinnes of *infirmity* there is yet behind, containing many branches under it, of which 'twould be too long to treat *particularly*, and yet without a *particular* deſcending to *particulars*, hard to define whether they be *infirmities*, or no. Namely, ſinnes which *paſſion* betrayes us to, meaning thereby ſuch *paſſions* which 'tis not in the *Chriſtian's power* ſo to *quell*, but that they will be *apt* thus to betray him. Theſe ſinnes are either 1. the *inordinacy* of theſe paſſions themſelves, which I thinke neither *nature* nor *grace* can ſo wholly *conquer* in this life, but that in ſome kind or other there will at ſome time appeare ſome *inordinacy*, ſome act of either *immoderate anger*, or *feare*, or *love*, or *joy*, or *ſorrow*, at ſome time or other, and of theſe we may define in generall, that he that firſt *ſtudies himſelfe* ſo carefully as to diſcerne which of theſe he is moſt *inclinable* to by his *temper*, and then *labours ſincerely* againſt all, but with moſt *induſtry* againſt that, to which he is moſt *inclinable*, (of which ſincerity he will be able to paſſe ſome judgement by the daily *impairing* of the violence of thoſe *paſſions*, for ſure if he *labour ſincerely*, eſpecially by the uſe of *proper meanes*, he will be able to *advance* ſomewhat toward *victory*, though not abſolutely *arrive* to it) ſhall have the excuſe of *infirmities* for his *Sect.* 34.

ſome few acts of *immoderate paſſion.*

Sect. 35. Or 2. Theſe ſinnes are ſome other ſpecificall *acts* of ſinne which theſe *paſſions* betray men to, which though much *different* in *guilt* as well as *nature* from the *mother* ſinnes, and many times very far from *infirmities*, (for ſure he that for *feare* would *ſacrifice* to *Idols*, through *anger kill* &c. will hardly be thus *excuſed*) yet is it very *poſſible* that ſuch ſinnes that ſome *paſſions* may *betray* us to, may deſerve that title of *infirmities*. As when any *naturall trembling* or other *paſſion* incident to the *fleſh*, being (without any *improvement* into an *inordinate paſſion*) an *incitation* of mind, makes me not diſcerne or not weigh the ſinfulneſſe of ſome *ſmall light* ſinne, which offers it ſelfe to rid me from my *feare* &c. as if the venturing of ſome *leſſer ſinne* ſhould promiſe me *reſcue* from *death*, which being otherwiſe repreſented to me as *unavoidable*, were withall very *formidable* to me.

Sect. 36. For although in this caſe the *leaſt ſinne* be not in ſtrictneſſe to be *admitted*, though it be for the *ſaving* of my *life*, and though the *deliberate reſolution* that in ſuch a caſe I will *venture* on ſuch a ſinne, becauſe it is but a ſinne of *Weakneſſe* and ſo *excuſable*, do make it in that caſe to be *wilfull* and *unexcuſable*; yet *abſtracting* it from this, and *conſidering* it *not before-hand*, but onely *at the time of ſuddaine ſurprizall*, it may be ſaid, that the *temptation* of the *feare* being ſo *great* above the *proportion* and ſize that the *ſinne* is at that time repreſented in, this may paſſe for a ſinne of *infirmity*.

Sect. 37. To come now to *ſpecificall* or *particular* ſinnes, and define *univerſim* that they are *ſinnes of infirmity* (as of ſome I did that they were *wilfull*) I ſhall not *adventure*, becauſe as I ſaid, ſome *circumſtances* might *improve* ſome acts under thoſe *ſpecies* into *wilfull ſinnes*, in *ſome* men at *ſome* time. All that I ſhall ſay is, that 1. *Evill thoughts* being *ſuddenly* (or aſſoone as they are *deprehended*) *rejected* with *indignation*, 2. *Wandring thoughts* in time of prayer, following us onely out of *cuſtome* of thinking on ſome *honeſt* or *lawfull* things (which yet I deſire and in ſome *ejaculation* pray for *ſtrength* to caſt away from me, when I ſet about that *worke*) and never *diſtinctly conſented to*, but *crouding* in upon a *confuſed imperfect conſent*, or *non-rejection*, 3. *Wicked motions unconſented to*, or if on the *ſuddaine conſented to*, yet preſently *retracted* againe,

(and

(and not onely *ſtrangled* or *fruſtrated* for *want* of *opportunity* of *acting* them) are moſt capable of that title of *infirmities*.

For any more *particular knowledge* of them, every man will beſt be able to *adviſe* himſelf, when he hath tryed his actions by this *touchſtone*, that [Thoſe onely are ſinnes of *infirmity*, when our *ſincere endeavour* and *induſtry* and the uſe of *grace* given us, and *prayer* for more *grace*, and other *meanes* preſcribed us, are not able to free us from *ſome acts* of thoſe ſinnes, or when all our *failings* in *endeavour* &c. are but conſequents of *humane frailty*, not *of wilfull ſinne*. *Sect.* 38.

Of theſe that which I ſhall ſay for cloſe, will, I conceive, be matter of as much *comfort*, as the former part was of *diſcomfort* to any. To wit, that through the *mercy* of *Chriſt* under the *Second Covenant*, *Infirmities unconquered*, *unforſaken*, *ſticking* to us till our very *deaths*, may be and ſhall be moſt certainly *pardoned* to them, that have nothing elſe to be charged on them. *i.e.* by whom all wilfull ſinnes be *ſincerely forſaken*, and for *infirmities* 1. their ſoules *humbled* in *confeſſion*, and *contrition*, 2. *pardon* humbly *begg'd* in *Chriſt's* name, and 3. *ſincere endeavour* uſed againſt them; they ſhall I ſay be *pardoned*, if not ſo farre as not to be *puniſhed* in this life, yet ſo farre as not to *ſeparate* from the *love* of *God* here, or viſion of *God* hereafter, though they be here never wholy *overcome*, or put off.

This I would make the interpretation of that *diſtinction* of a *generall* and *particular repentance*, ſo ordinary among Divines, that the *particular repentance* ſhould not onely deſcend to *particular wilfull* ſinnes, eſpecially thoſe that are committed after the receiving *knowledge of the truth*, but alſo extend to the *actuall forſaking* of them; but the *generall repentance* belong onely to *ſinnes of infirmity*; and that 1 without *deſcending* to all *particulars* of that kind, 2 without *extending our ſorrow* &c. for them to *actuall forſaking*. For the *ſacrifices* of the law being appointed to be offer'd for theſe *ſinnes*, but not for *wilfull*, argue that Chriſt typified by thoſe *ſacrifices*, *when we were weake*, *dyed for us*, and by his death hath obtained *pardon* (for all that *walke not after the fleſh*, *but after the ſpirit*) for all their ſinnes of *weakeneſſe*, on termes onely of humiliation, *particular*, or, where that cannot be, *generall confeſſion*, *prayer for pardon*, and *affiance in Chriſt* for that pardon,

pardon, without any *actuall overcomming* or caſting off, or *getting rid* of them, (which in *wilfull* ſinnes muſt be ſuperadded to the former), ſo, that he that at the time or minute of his *death* ſhould be guilty of one of them, it would not hinder his *ſalvation*, any more then the ſame would be inconſiſtent with a *regenerate juſtified eſtate* in time of life.

So that the concluſion may be ſafe and cleare. A true Chriſtian may ſafely live and dye with *ſins of infirmity* about him, but live or continue in any *wilfull* ſinne, much leſſe dye he cannot, or if he doe, he ceaſeth to be ſuch. *He that is borne of God ſinneth not*, and *he that doth ſinne is the ſervant of ſinne*. Some *ſpots* there are which are not the *ſpots of ſonnes*, *Deut.* 32. 5. and they that are guilty of them, may be *reſolved*, either never to have right unto, or if they had, to have *forfeited* all their *priviledges* of *Saintſhip here*, (ſuch are *juſtification*, &c.) and *hopes* and *benefits* of it *hereafter*.

OF

A PARAPHRASTICALL EXPLICATION OF *Heb.6.*

v.1. Διὸ. FOR *this cause* (or becauſe it is an evidence of children and *babes* to be *alwaies* fed with *milke*, ſtill taught nothing but the *elements of the beginning of the Oracles of God*, c.5.12. and to know nothing of that *higher doctrine of righteouſneſſe*, *i. e.* of our *juſtification* and *ſanctification*, v.13. which depends extreamely on the doctrine of *Chriſt's Melchizedekian Prieſthood*, v.10. to which *being conſecrated*, v.9. he [*became the author of eternall ſalvation to all thoſe that obeyhim*,] which words are the *compendium* of the Doctrine of our *Juſtification and ſanctification.*) Let *us proceede to* this higher and more *perfect doctrine*, or ſuch as is proportionable to an upper forme of Chriſtians, *leaving* or paſſing over theſe *doctrines that Chriſt began with*, (ſuch was that of *repentance and faith*, *Mark.* 1.15. the firſt words of his preaching) and not beginning at the very elements of Chriſtianity, againe, thoſe fundamentall doctrines that the raweſt Chriſtians are taught; as by name thoſe, First, of *repentance* and turning *from our unregenerate workes*. Secondly, of *Faith* or beleefe on God. Thirdly, of *baptizing*, as that containes both the baptiſme of *Repentance* and of *Faith* precedent, both *John's* baptiſme, the *baptiſme of repentance*, and Chriſt's baptiſme adminiſtred by the *Apoſtles*, the baptiſme of *Faith* in the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*. Fourthly, of *laying* on *of hands*, whether that which is anſwerable to our *Confirmation*, oft

λόγυ διακαιοσύνης,

ὅπι τὸν τελειότητα φερώμεθα, ἀφέντες τὴν τῆς ἀρχῆς τ̃ χριστ̃ λόγον.

μετανοίας ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων, καὶ πίστεως, βαπτισμῶν ἐπιθέσεως τε χειρῶν

 menti-

mentioned of those that *had* beene *baptized*, or that in *Absolution*, or a third, that *on the diseased*, the ceremony of curing them, (of which there is so frequent mention in the Gospells, *Matth.*9.18. and 19.13. *Mark.*5.23. and 6.5. and 7.32. and 8.23, 25. and 16.18. *Luk.*4.40. and 13.13. and many times in the Acts in the description of miraculous cures.) Fiftly, *of the resurrection* of the dead. Sixthly, *of eternall judgement* or μισθαποδοσία, adjudging of men to eternall life and eternall death. *And by the help of God*, this *we purpose to doe*, *i.e.* to proceed to those sublimer doctrines of Christ's Melchisedekian Priesthood, fore-mentioned, *c.*5. and resumed *v.*20. of this Chapter. Onely for those that are such *non-proficients* in Christianity, that after so long profession of that doctrine need still to be taught the principles againe, even that of *repentance from dead workes*, being themselves turned backe or in danger so to turn to their former *Vn-christian* unregenerate *courses*, let them know this important truth, for which I cannot but goe out of my way a little, and tell them in a *parenthesis*; That it is *impossible*, that those who have bin *once regenerated* (for this is the result of that which is expressed by many phrases) that have once been *baptized or enlightened*, the word signifies both, because *adulti* were not *baptized*, till they had beene *catechised*, and sufficiently *instructed* in the faith. 2. That have had a *gust or tast of the celestiall gift*, whether of *Christ*, that *Tit.*2. is called σωτήριος χάρις, *salvificall saving grace*, or whether the *grace of Christ*. 3. That have beene *partakers of the Holy Ghost*, of those gifts and graces which that worketh in the heart by the preaching of the word, or invisible overshadowing. 4. That have had a *gust of the good word*, or *Gospell* (εὐαγγέλιον & καλὸν ῥῆμα, being all one) of Christ, and of *the powers whether of the Kingdome of grace*, the state of *Christianity*, (for that is cal'd μέλλων αἰὼν, the age to come, by the LXXII. *Is.*9.6. where it is set, as the title of *Christ*, that he is πατὴρ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος, *the father of the age to come*, as opposite to that *Judaicall* State) or whether of the Kingdome *of heaven*)

ἀναστάσεως τε νεκρῶν, καὶ κρίματος αἰωνίου. 3. καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσομεν, ἐάν περ ἐπιτρέπῃ ὁ Θεός.

4. Ἀδύνατον γὰρ τοὺς ἅπαξ φωτιθέντας,

γευσαμένους τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς ἐπουρανίου,

μετόχους γεννηθέντας πνεύματος ἁγίου,

5. καὶ καλὸν γευσαμένους θεοῦ ῥῆμα,

δυνάμεις τε μέλλοντος αἰῶνος.

6. καὶ παραπεσόντας ven,) and fall *from that ſtate of regeneration*, and thoſe *priviledges* of Gods Spirit that attend it, (for the παραπεσόντας is of equall latitude with all the former particulars, and is the *falling from*, or *forfeiting* of them all) ſhould *renew*, or *recover* in an *intranſitive* ſenſe, or in an *active reciprocall, renew or recover themſelves to repentance*, (or once more being applyed to Saint *Paul's* diſcourſe of *repentance, that Saint* Paul's *preaching* (taken by it ſelfe without *ſuperordinary* meaſure of *grace*, ſhould *renew* ſuch in a plaine *active* ſenſe) being by ſuch ſinnes of theirs *guilty of a kind* of *recrucifying of Chriſt, and putting him to a ſhameſull death*; for *Chriſt* who was once *crucifyed* and ſlaine, is as it were *revived* in the *regenerate* Chriſtian's heart, *lives* and *rules* and *reignes* in him *by faith*, and when that man *falls* to his old *unregenerate* courſe againe, he *crucifyes Chriſt anew, and puts him* to a *contumelious death*.

ἀνακαινίζειν

εἰς μετάνοιαν,

ἀνασταυροῦντας ἑαυτοῖς τὸν υἱὸν τ̃ θεοῦ, καὶ παραδειγματίζοντας.

The cleare underſtanding of theſe 3 verſes 4,5,6. depends upon theſe 6 *Goſpell-truths* put together. Firſt, that without God's *Spirit or ſpecial grace* no man can *convert, repent, renew* himſelfe, much leſſe *recover* after a *defection*. Secondly, that by this *grace* and ſtrength of God, man may *convert* and *repent*, and being a regenerate convert, *do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens him, worke out his owne ſalvation*, and when he *falls*, if God do not *with-draw* that grace, according to the words of our article, *he may by the grace of God riſe againe*. Thirdly, that if in caſe of fall God doth ſo *with-draw* his grace, then the man cannot ſo *renew* himſelfe, or *recover* to repentance, nor can the *ordinary* power of the *miniſtery* worke upon him. Fourthly, that God hath in the Goſpell *threatned* upon our not making *uſe* of this grace, to *withdraw* it or *take* it away from us, as appeares by the *parable* of the *talents*, where 'tis ſaid, [*To him that hath, ſhall be given, and from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away even that which he hath*] *i.e.* To him that makes *uſe* of the *grace* given him, to the end for which 'twas given, the *reſiſting* of ſinnes, *denying of luſts*, and *living ſoberly, and juſtly*, and *godly in this preſent world*, *Tit.* 2. 12. to him ſhall more *grace be given*; but *from him* that makes not this *uſe* of it, (is an unprofitable *ſteward* of *grace*, hath

grace, but doth not thus *resist* sinnes by the helpe of it, *from him*) *shall be taken away even that which he hath.* Fiftly, that God doth not upon every *sinne* committed by a *regenerate man*, no not upon every sinne committed against *knowledge*, *against grace* (if it be but some single act) presently *with-draw* his *grace*, for this sinne may be presently *retracted* by repentance, not indulged or staid in, and then to such *humble* sinners *God gives grace*, doth not *take it away* from them. The case that such acts of sinne bring regenerate men to, hath from the Scripture beene explained in another discourse, which I desire may be there considered, and not repeated here. And though it be a *sad* one, even God's *delivering up to Satan*, yet doth not that inferre the *with-drawing* of his *Grace*, or *forsaking*, but rather the *giving* or continuing *sufficient grace*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *passage out*, and *power of bearing it*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. But then sixthly, that upon the *regenerate* man's *walking* after the *flesh*, *relapsing* into the sinnes of his former unregenerate life, *like a dogge to the vomit*, *&c.* or into a new set of other sinnes, *spirituall pride*, *faction* (able to denominate a man *carnall*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3.) and the like filthinesse of the spirit, then doth God *with-draw* his *spirit* from that man, and therefore such sinnes as these are called *peccata vastantia conscientiam*, *& tristantia spiritum*, *grieving* and *quenching* of the *spirit* of God; which though it *strives* with sinners, yet *shall* it *not alwaies strive*, *Gen.* 6. 3. *when unrighteousnesse commeth in*, *i.e.* any old or new *vicious habit*, then the *holy spirit of discipline will not abide*, *Wisd.* 1. 5. And therefore 'tis said, 2 *Pet.* 2. 21. That they that *after they have knowne*, *turne from the holy Commandement*, *or the way of righteousnesse*, *and are againe entangled in the pollutions of the world*, *which they had once escaped*, *v.* 20. *fall into a worse estate then they were in before their regeneration*; which must needs be by the *totall with-drawing of grace* from them. To which purpose is that of Saint *James* out of *Solomon*, that *God resisteth the proud*, where *resisting* is opposed to *giving* of grace, and so notes *taking it away*, and the *proud* opposed to the *humble*, are the proud impenitent *obdurate* sinners, or they that go on in any impenitent course against *knowledg* or *conscience*. All which being premised, 'tis cleare that they that are thus fallen from a *regenerate state* to their *old unregenerate course of sinne*, *&c.* and so by Gods *just punishment deprived*

Of Conscien p. 34.

Παραπεσόντες

deprived of his grace, without which they were able to doe nothing, are not now *poſſibly* able to *recover* or *renew themſelves to repentance*. As they that are only *ſlipt* or *fallen*, but not *layne downe* in their mire of ſinne, might by the grace which they yet have, and by the preaching of the word, be able to doe.

That this is the meaning of the place, may yet farther appeare by the *ſimilitude* following, *v.* 7, 8. brought on purpoſe to explaine it. For the *ground* that hath the *benefit* of the *raine* to *moiſten* its naturall *drineſſe*, and ſo to make it *able* to *beare fruit*, and that hath ſuck't in that *raine*, and been *actually moiſtned* by it, (which is the lively expreſſion of the premiſed *regenerate* man) if *it doe bring forth fruit to the husbandman*, *performe* that which it is *enabled* (and is *expected* from it) to *performe*, (which is an expreſſion of him that makes good *uſe of grace*, lives like a *regenerate* man, this [*he that hath*] in the parable of the *talent*) *it ſhall receive bleſſing from God* (the *more grace* in the parable.) But that ſame *moiſtned* and *manured ground* (the ſame *regenerate* man) *which bringeth forth nothing but thornes and briars*, (the ſervant that proves evill and faithleſſe, that makes not *uſe* of *grace* to its due end of *reſiſting luſts*, and *overcomming the world*, but falls into his *unregenerate* ſins, lives as if no *culture* had beene beſtowed upon him) is *rejected*, (*deprived* of that reward which tother had) for ſo ἀδόκιμος, an *agoniſticall* word, ſignifies generally in this booke, as 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. one that *miſſes the prize*, *the reward*) the *bleſſing* of *more grace*: And contrarywiſe is *nigh to curſing*, that puniſhment of withdrawing of grace due to it, and the *end of it* is to be burnt, or to burning, which whether it be ſet to note *eternall perdition*, or elſe an *extraordinary* kinde of *husbandry*, which we call *Devonſhireing*, cutting off the turfe and *burning* it upon the ground, to make that beare which *ordinary culture* would doe no good on, I ſhall not define. Onely from that latter interpretation, which I ſuppoſe will be rejected, I ſhall take the hint to ſay that which though the interpretation be not admitted, will yet be without contradiction

7. Γῆ γὰρ ἡ πιοῦσα τὸν ἐπ' αὐτῆς πολλάκις ἐρχόμενον ὑετὸν, καὶ τίκτουσα βοτάνην εὐθετον ἐκείνοις δι' οὓς καὶ γεωργεῖται, μεταλαμβάνει εὐλογίας ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

8. ἐκφέρουσα δὲ ἀκάνθας καὶ τριβόλους, ἀδόκιμος.

κατάρας ἐγγύς, ἧς τὸ τέλος εἰς καῦσιν.

true, that how *impoſſible* ſo ever it be for ſuch an one to *recover himſelfe*, or for the ordinary meanes to worke upon him, yet 'tis ſtill *poſsible*, that God may by ſome *extraordinary* meanes of *ſpirituall husbandry recover* and *reduce* that man. All that is here affirmed is onely this, that there is no promiſe that he will, and the thing is onely in the *hands*, the *free hands of God*, not ſo much as *conſtrained* by a *promiſe*, and ſo no ground either of *depending* upon it for my ſelfe that God will doe it for me, or *prejudging* others that for them he will not doe it.

I can foreſee but one objection now producible againſt the *probability* of this interpretation, and it is this, that this *impoſſibility* of doing any good by our owne *naturall ſtrength* without Grace is ſo *univerſall* a truth, that it cannot be here appropriated to this one caſe of *apoſtaſie* or *recidivation* of the *regenerate*. For the *regenerate*, *remaining* ſo, can doe no *good* thing without it, and thoſe that are not yet *regenerate* are as unable to *convert* themſelves, as theſe are to *recover* or *renew*. To which though I might anſwer, that the inſtancing in this *particular*, is moſt (and only) proper to the *Apoſtles* preſent purpoſe, who ſpeakes to *converts*, who were either thus *fallen* or in danger thus to *fall*, (and therefore though the *Aphoriſme* might be extended to thoſe others, yet we have no reaſon to expect, that the *Apoſtle* ſhould ſo farre *recede* from his buſineſſe in hand as to doe it, and ſo the *objection* will be of no force) yet will the *anſwer* be more *cleare* and *ſatisfactory*, if I adde, that indeed that which is here ſaid, is *proper* onely to this *kind* of ſinners, the relapſt regenerate. For of the *regenerate* not ſo falne, it is moſt certaine and agreeable to Scripture-doctrine to affirme, that by the *ſpirit of Chriſt he can do all things*, that he hath *ſufficient grace*, and by that *ſufficient ſtrength* to doe what God in the *Goſpell requires* of him, and therefore 'tis affirmed of *him*, *i.e.* his *perſon* thus enabled, that he is thus able; and conſequently he is every where *exhorted* to doe accordingly, to *worke out his ſalvation*, *to ſtand*, to *quit himſelfe like a man*, to *purifie himſelfe*, and a hundred the like, which (every one) ſuppoſe him to have *grace* by which to doe it.

And for the *unregenerate*, though indeed he having no *grace*, can as yet doe nothing, yet ſome *promiſes* there are in the *new Covenant* of giving of grace to him, (mention of giving Chriſt *for*

every

every man, (that Chriſt being the σωτὴρ & χάρις, *the ſalvifical grace that appeares to all, teaching them, &c.*) and in *Chriſt* ſtriking a *Covenant* with thoſe to whom he is *given,* and part of the effect of that *Covenant,* δοῦναι λατρεύειν, *to give ſtrength to ſerve him,* and againe mention of the *talents* diſpens'd among the *ſervants,* to *all ſome,* and upon the good *uſe* of the *leaſt more* beſtowed. From whence ſure it may be concluded, that 'tis by ſome *default* of our owne, whoſoever have not *ſufficient grace* given us, eſpecially the *promiſe* being ſo punctuall, that *God will give the Holy Spirit to them that aske him of God by importunate unwearied prayer.*) Whereas in *caſe* of the fore-mentioned *relapſe,* there is no ſuch *promiſe* of *Grace,* to give us ſuch a *claime* to it, nor conſequently the ſame degree of *poſſibility* to *renew,* that the other hath to *convert,* God's *promiſe* of giving *grace* to them, which doe not *reſiſt* it, adding much to that poſſibility; and his *no promiſe* to the other, being *ſufficient proofe* of the *impoſſibility* of the other, according to the importance of *Aquinas* his note out of *Ariſtotle, l. 3. Eth.* that thoſe things are ſaid to be poſſible to us which we can doe by the *helpe* of our *friends,* (which we can doe by a *derived power,* though of our ſelves *originally* we cannot) and God being a *friend* (I meane no enemy, but lover and helper beyond all friends) to *unregenerate* men, ſo farre as to *give Chriſt to dye* for them, and his *holy Spirit* to *deſcend to them,* being ſuch *enemies,* to *love* them and give them the effects of *love,* whereas to them that have *rebelled* and *vexed* his *Spirit,* he is not ſuch a *friend,* but an *enemy to fight againſt them, Iſ.* 63. 10. And ſo no ſuch *ſecundary derived* way of *poſſibility* competible to them, becauſe no ſuch aſſurance of any friend to aid them in it, there being none other *imaginable* but *God,* and he being to ſuch an one an *enemy* rather.

Parallel to this place thus interpreted is that in the ſame Ep. *c.* 10.

26. Ἑκουσίως γὰρ ἁμαρτανόντων ἡμῶν μετὰ τὸ λαβεῖν τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας,

For thoſe that after the accepting of the knowledge of the truth, after the embracing the *Goſpell,* or *Chriſtianity,* being *regenerate* and *born anew of water* and the *Holy Ghoſt,* doe fall *willingly* into their *old* (or other *new*) *courſes* of ſinne (for ſo ἁμαρτάνειν ſignifies, not the ſingle *act,* but the *habit* of ſinne, 1 *Joh.* 3. 6. and 5. 18. *Rom.* 2. 12. *Heb.* 3. 17. and ἑκουσίως added thereto notes it to be a *voluntary* willfull trade of ſinne,

ſinne, which is ſuppoſed by having *received knowledge of the truth*; whereas 'tis poſſible to continue *ignorantly*, and ſo by infirmity in ſuch *habit*, and then that will not be capable of ſuch *aggravations* as there doe follow, nor withall pertinent to this caſe) by this meanes fall into a condition, for which the *Goſpell* hath not provided any ordinary *remedy*. Which is the meaning of [*there remaines not now a ſacrifice for ſinnes*] And that ſenſe ariſeth thus. For them that had *ſinned ignorantly* under the *law*, there was *place* for *ſacrifice*, the *Prieſt* was to offer a *ſinne-offering* for them (called ordinarily in the 72. περὶ ἁμαρτίας) and they were not to be farther *puniſhed* or proceeded againſt *in foro*, but he that did *wilfully* or *deſpightfully* breake the law, was upon *ſufficient* proofe of it by *witneſſes*, put to death in *capitall*, or otherwiſe puniſhed in other *crimes*, without *mercy* or *pity* to him, (which is the ſum of the 28 verſe) & ſo in like manner proportionably to thoſe types, he that hath ſinned through *ignorance* or *ignorantly*, lived, and gone on in *ſinne*, (and ſuch the ſinnes of the *unregenerate* life are counted to be, done *ignorantly in unbeliefe*, as Saint *Paul* ſaith of himſelfe, and the ſame will hold of the ſinnes of thoſe that are *Chriſtians* in *profeſſion*, *baptized*, *&c.* and yet have not amended their *lives* or forſaken their *ſinnes*, for they are ſtill in an *unregenerate ſtate*, not capable of that deſcription, *c.* 6. 4, 5.) *there is mercy* to be had for him (as Saint *Paul* ſaith of himſelfe, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13.) *Chriſt* hath *dyed*, offered himſelfe a *ſacrifice* for ſinne, and ſo delivered men from the *danger* of ſuch ſinnes, upon condition that they doe *repent* of them, and *amend*, nay by this *ſacrifice* of his he hath purchaſed *grace* for ſuch, *ſufficient* to bring them out of that *darkeneſſe* to *light*, from that ſtate of *unregeneration* to *repentance*, ſo that for that man conſidered in that ſtate, though he be a ſinner, yet (as Saint *John* ſaith, 1 *Epiſt.* 2.1.) Chriſt is an *advocate* and a *propitiation*, and here there *remaineth a ſacrifice*, a meanes of *pardon* and a meanes of *converting*, Chriſt *giving himſelfe*, both that he might *redeem* and *purifie*, *Tit.* 2.14. *juſtify* and *ſanctify*. Yea farther, when this man being regenerate falls into any *ſingle act of ſin*, (if it be through *ignorance* or *weakeneſſe* (as ſtill there remaine ſome *relicks* of them in the *regenerate*, the

ἐν. ἔτι περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν ἀπολείπεται θυσία.

28. Ἀθετήσας τὶ, νόμου Μωσέως, χωρὶς οἰκτιρμῶν ἐπὶ δυσὶν ἢ τρισὶ μάρτυσιν ἀποθνήσκει.

the ſtate in this *nonage* of ours, being but an *imperfect* ſtate) then ἔτι *yet* or *ſtill* this *ſacrifice* remaines, and pardon is had by it to the *regenerate diſciple* upon *acknowledgement* and *petition*; nay if it be not capable of the excuſe of *ignorance* or *weakeneſſe*, yet if it be not *continued* in, but *retracted* preſently by *repentance*, this ſacrifice ἔτι *ſtill remaines* in force for him, as in the Law when the *leproſie* doth *not ſpread*, *Lev.* 13.23. or is *healed* in the *leper*, 14.3. then though the *Prieſt ſhut him up againe ſeven daies*, &c. anſwerable to *excommunication* or *delivering up to Satan*, yet ſtill *v.* 4. the *Prieſt* ſhall *offer ſacrifice* for his cleanſing, and ſo here though the *ſinne* be *leproſie*, an *uncleane ſpot* in the ſoule, yet being not *ſpreading* but preſently *retracted* by repentance, it may bring ſome *inconveniencies* upon him, ſuch as have been mentioned elſewhere in the caſe of *delivering up to Satan*; but yet it may paſſe for a *ſpot of ſonnes*, at leaſt ſuch as ſhall now not hinder from being a ſonne; and this *ſacrifice* here, or 1 *Joh.* 1.7. the *bloud of Chriſt* parallell to it, *cleanſeth from ſuch ſinnes* as theſe, continues *pardon* and *grace* as yet to ſuch, *obtaines* of God that he *with-draw* neither. But if any man, after the *embracing* of Chriſt, *receiving* the *truth* and *grace*, i. e. being thus *regenerate*, ſhall returne to his *old pollutions* again, (or ſome new in exchange for them, the *filthineſſe of the ſpirit* in ſtead of that *of the fleſh*) to a *courſe* and *trade* of *ſinne*, having not now the excuſes or alleviations, of which before he was capable, ſhewing himſelfe to *contemne* both the *mercy* and *grace* of God, to *deſpiſe* that *pardon*, and (to make no uſe of, but contrariwiſe) to *reſiſt* that *grace*; there is no *direction* for any *offering* for ſuch; this very *ſacrifice* of Chriſt belongs not to him ſo farre as by *Covenant* to obtaine *continuance* of *pardon* for him, or *continuance* of *grace*; God may juſtly with-draw both, and *Chriſt's bloud* ſay nothing to the contrary; nay, God hath told us that in this *caſe* he will *with-draw* both in the places forementioned, and the ſame may be collected from this place from the aggravations here ſet upon the ſinne, that it is the *treading upon the Sonne of God*, *profaning the bloud of the Covenant*, *i.e.* making the bloud of Chriſt *uneffectuall* to his *pardon*, and *contumeliouſly* uſing the *ſpirit of grace*, and ſo *grieving* and *quenching that ſpirit*. And

20 ὁ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καταπατήσας, καὶ τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης κοινὸν ἡγησάμενος, ἐν ᾧ ἡγιάσθη, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς χάριτος ἐνυβρίσας,

so v. 27. all that *remaines* behind in *justice*, or by tenour of the *second Covenant* expectable from God, is that he should proceed to *judge* such a *sinner*, and his *zeale* or *wrath burne* like fire, to consume all such *gainesayers* or *adversaries* that walke thus contrary to all his methods of mercy, of grace, and from hence all that can toward *comfort* of such be concluded, is, that 'tis not here said, that God cannot or never *will* give *grace* againe to such, or use *meanes* for the *recalling* them, because of God this is not here affirmed. From which negative argument, though the *possibility* of such *recovery* may be concluded, yet there are little grounds to *conclude* it *probable*, or reasonable for any man (that should by that be encouraged to spirituall security) to *depend* or *hope* in it, for if the weight of one *passage* be observed (*how much worse punishment shall he be thought worthy of or adjudged to?* i. e. *worse* then that under *Moses law*, when the *offender*, 28. was *put to death without mercy*) we shall rather have *reason* to *feare* God will punish such with *excision* or *cutting* off, without giving any new stocke of *grace* to *recall* them againe: For the word ἀξιωθήσεται in this booke doth not so often import *being thought worthy*, (which might consist with *contrary mercy*) as *meeting* with that reward, *actuall receiving* of it. So ἀξιωθῆναι δόξης, *Heb.* 3. 3. is to *have honour bestowed* upon him, (and ἀξιωθῆναι τίμης, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17.) and not onely to be *thought worthy* of it. In proportion to which if the words should be interpreted and taken without *exception* or *dispensation*, [ἀξιωθήσεται, *&c. he shall be punished in a worse manner*] there will be little place of *comfort* for such to depend on, and from thence to fall into such *dangerous snares*; and yet because after all this 'tis possible that though ἀξιωθήσεται in the *good* sense signifie *actuall giving*, yet it may not in the *ill*, *actuall punishing*, because to *thinke worthy* and to *reward*, still goe together in *God*, in *retribution* of *good*, but not so in *evill*, his *pardoning mercy* oft interceding; and againe, because those words may well passe not for any *law set* to *God*, (but onely as a *meanes* to keep us from so *falling*, when we *stand*, by setting such a *direfull character* upon it, shewing us how *promiseless* and *dangerous* such our state is) it will therefore be no temptation to anywho is in this *sad* estate to be *hopeless* or

30 φοβερὰ δὲ τις ἐκδοχὴ &c.

31. πόσῳ χείρονος ἀξιωθήσεται τιμωρίας;

give

give over *labouring* to get out again, but rather a *Swimmers* or *Acclamation* of *terrour*, ſtraight to *awaken* him out of that eſtate to *humiliation* and *prayers* to *God*, leſt it be *too late*. And in this the example of *David* will be *encouragement* to him, who after a years *ſleepe* or *lethargy* in thoſe ſins of *adultery* and *murther*, &c. (which were ſuch *falls* of a *regenerate man*, and by God's ordinary meanes never retracted all that while) was yet by God's grace, and miſſion of a Prophet extraordinary *recalled* and *reduced* again, though it coſt him afterwards many *floods* of *teares* & penitentiall expreſſions to waſh out thoſe ſpots which he had thus contracted (& though even ſtill he lies under the *reproach* of that ſinne, when he doth not of any other, becauſe that *only* was *indulged* in ſo *long*) 1 *King.* 15. 5. And the ſame may be ſaid of *Solomon* alſo, who after ſuch heavie *falls*, which beyond all the children of God are ſadly recorded of him in Scripture, was by *God* brought back to *repentance*; *God's mercy* being beyond all promiſe (I ſhall adde beyond all other *example*) to him in this behalfe.

And therefore the cloſe muſt be, that if we have *followed* them in their *ſinnes*, we muſt be ſure to *imitate* them alſo, not only in the repentance, and *ſincerity* of that, but in all the *degrees* and *demonſtrations* of their *repentance*, if we *hope* for the *mercy* which they met with. To *which* I ſhall adde no more ſave onely this, that the *product* of that which from theſe places hath beene *concluded*, ſeemes to be very agreeable with that famous caſe ſet by Saint *Auguſtine*, *l. de perſever:* of two men ſuppoſed to be *converted* together, to live the life of *converts* in the ſame manner, to fall together, and ſo to continue ſome time, and then one of them *before death* to *recover* and *riſe* againe, and the other to *dye* in his *ſtate* of relapſe; where he makes this an argument and example of God's making a *diſcrimination* betwixt men, ſuppoſing this laſt act of recovery in the one, to be an act of ſpirituall extraordinary grace to him, which was not given, nor by any obligation due unto the other; which is the moſt that from theſe two places thus paraphraſed hath beene collected.

He that thinketh he ſtandeth let him take heed leſt he fall. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

If any man be overtaken in a fault, you that are ſpirituall reſtore ſuch a man, conſidering thy ſelfe leſt thou alſo be tempted, Gal. 6. 1.

Then ſaith the Devill, I will returne to my houſe from whence I came out; and comming he findeth it empty, ſwept, and garniſhed; then goeth he and taketh with him ſeven other ſpirits worſe then himſelfe, and they goe in and dwell there, and the end of that man is worſe then the beginning. So ſhall it be to this evill generation, Mat. 12. 43.

Behold thou art made cleane, goe, ſinne no more, leſt a worſe thing happen unto thee. Joh. 5. 14.

OF

OF A LATE, OR, A DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

Brutus in Epist. ad Pergamen.

Οὐ δοτέον μετάνοιαν τοῖς ὑ πρὶν εἰς τὸ παντελὲς χαμεῖν ματανοῦσι.

By HENRY HAMMOND D. D.

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OF A LATE OR A Death-bed Repentance.

CONCERNING a *late* or *Death-bed repentance*, (which I conceive much fitter for a *ſad ſecret conſideration* in the preſence onely of God, and the Scripture, & ones own ſoul; then for a *diſpute* or *debate*, wherein either each party may be unwilling to *yeeld*, or willing to *retaine* their owne prepoſſeſſions, or elſe that perſon that hath *long depended* on the benefit of a *late repentance*, may thinke it great *raſhneſſe* to *reſigne* up that *hold* upon *ſlight* grounds, and ſuch will any ſeeme to be at a ſuddaine tranſient repreſentation;) It muſt firſt be acknowledged, that one of thoſe two things is ordinarily underſtood by it, either the *perfecting our accounts with God* at that time, *reinforcing all our former good reſolutions, and ſhutting up* that buſines of our ſoules, which in time of health had beene ſincerely *begun*, but not *perfected*; or elſe the *Beginning* of that worke of *Repentance* at that time. *Sect.* 1.

For the firſt of theſe it is acknowledged, that the *Cloſe* of *our dayes*, whether it be *old age*, or *ſicke bed*, is very proper and uſefull to that purpoſe. For the perſon that hath before that, ſincerely converted to God with unfained *ſorrow* and *confeſſion* of all former ſinnes, and firme *reſolution* of amendment, (which is the *leaſt* that *true repentance* can conſiſt of) may then, when he ſees himſelfe drawing toward a *period of a life*, mixt with *infirmities*, and *ſinnes*, lay his full *load* on his owne ſhoulders, and ſo with *true ſorrow* and *compunction*, *come heavy laden to his Saviour*, lay downe that burthen before God by particular *confeſſion*, and *beſeech* his *Sect.* 2.

pardon

pardon through the *ſufferings* and *ſatisfaction* of Chriſt for every of theſe; which *pardon* the true ſincere *penitent* hath on thoſe termes promiſe to *receive* from Heaven. Nay, he that had before made many good *reſolutions*, and yet through *cuſtome* of the place, through ſtrength of *naturall conſtitution*, and ſuch like *temptations*, hath hitherto not beene ſo faithfull to his *reſolutions*, as he ought, may now at laſt upon God's *viſitation*, and by helpe of this *diſcipline of Heaven*, *radicate* and *ſettle ſuch reſolutions* ſo deepe, that they would be conſtant, and perſevering, if he ſhould againe recover; and ſo this *diſcipline* may in that caſe be thought to have beene deſigned by God to this *wholſome* end, and the working of ſuch an *effect* will no doubt be *acceptable* in his ſight.

Sect. 3. But for the ſecond, the *beginning*, I ſay the *beginning* the *worke of repentance at that time*, I deſire theſe particulars may ſeriouſly be laid to heart. 1. In a generall view of it, whether it be not *reprochfull* and contumelious thus to offer God the *refuſe* and veſt of our *age* and *parts*, like that offering to *Ceres Phygalienſis in Pauſanias*; none of the hony of their *bees*, but only *the wax*, or juiceleſſe part of their labour; and of their wooll; thoſe fleeces which *were not fit for uſe, but full of the duglockes, the courſeſt and fouleſt part of it*. That kinde of wooll, if a late *Criticke* bold conjecture might be heeded, was it in which the *ſponge* of *vinegar* was put, when 'twas given *Chriſt* on the *Croſſe*. The *Criticiſme* I ſhall confeſſe very *inſolent*, but the obſervation on that *ſuppoſition*, *true* and *obvious* enough, that it was the greateſt *contumely* that could have beene offered unto Chriſt.

μελισσῶν τὰ κηρία.

τὰ μὴ εἰς ἐργασίαν κηρὸν ἥκοντα ἀλλ' ἔτ' ἀνόπλεα τοῖσύπτοις, τοῖσύπτω, ποῖσσόπω φελθέντες. Heinſ. in Ariſt. 21.

2. Whether a perſon that now in time of *youth or health*, *depends* in any meaſure upon that *repentance* of *old age*, or *diſeaſe*, that *deferres the forſaking of wilfull ſinnes*, or *labouring* to overcome *paſſions* or *vanities* for the preſent, in contemplation of the poſſibility of doing all this at the laſt, and of the conceived *benefits* or uſefulneſſe of ſuch *repentance*, do not, for the preſent, *grieve*, and *reſiſt*, and *refuſe* the *holy ſpirit* of *God*, which at that time importunes to be *heard* and *obeyed*.

Sect. 4. 3. Whether he do not promiſe himſelfe, that though Gods ſpirit be thus *grieved and reſiſted*, yet he will never be *wearied out*, but will be as bountifull and conſtant in giving of grace, after *ſuch reſiſtance*, as before.

4. Whether

4. Whether to *hope* this be not *contrary*, as to that of the *Prophet*, *Isa.* 63. 10. *They rebelled and vexed his holy ſpirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought againſt them*; ſo alſo to the *method* of God in diſpenſing his *Grace* deſcribed in the *Goſpell*, eſpecially in the *parable* of the *Talents*, which goes upon this rule, that he that makes *uſe* of, and improves that meaſure of *Grace* which *God* affords, *ſhall have more*, but he that doth not, that *which he hath ſhall be taken away from him*; As *Gen.* 5.3. where we read *my ſpirit ſhall not alwaies ſtrive with fleſh*; the *Greeke* hath οὐ καταμενεῖ, *ſhall not abide* or *dwell* with him; & the *Hebrew* is thought to have a peculiar notion (דין from נדן a ſheath) *my ſpirit* or the ſpirit which I have given to man, *ſhall not be* thus unprofitably laid up, and *ſheathed in him*, the *talent* that lies ſo long idle ſhall at length be *taken away*, and the *floud be ſent* to *awake* or *drowne* ſuch *unprofitable-ſpirited-men*. It is the phanſy of a very learned man, that theſe were the τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασι, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. *the ſpirits (in priſon* ſay we) of whom God ſo complaines that they *were ſheathed*, lay idly and unprofitable in mankind, in *Noah's dayes who went and preacht to them*. Which if it be rightly conjectured by him, will conclude them, and all ſuch others in the number of the ἀπειθήσαντες, *v.* 20. *diſobedient*, whoſe *repentance* and amendment Gods patience (ἅπαξ ἐξεδέχετο) *once expected*, but at length gave over *expecting*; the very ſame provoking condition (expreſt by the ſame word, ἀπειθήσασι) that *Heb.* 3. 18. is put under that direfull *oath* of God, that *they ſhould not enter into his reſt*. Thus the preaching of the Goſpel, the means of working grace being allowed in an eminent manner to God's people the Jewes, and after the death of Chriſt, yet farther continued to them for ſome time, upon their *reſiſting of thoſe meanes*, *is taken* away from them, *Mat.* 21. 43. To which purpoſe that *terrible* paſſage ſo oft repeated and ſo little underſtood (*Matth.* 13. 13. *Mar.* 4.12. *Luk.* 8.10. *Joh.* 12.40. *Act.* 28.26. *Rom.* 11.8. all taken out of *Iſa.* 6. 9.) is very obſervable, being in the place of the *Acts* peculiarly applied to this matter, the removing of the *meanes of grace* from the *Jewes* to the *Gentiles*, *v.* 28. of all which ſeverall repetitions of the ſame words, this is the plaine conſtant ſenſe, that *becauſe* they had firſt *reſiſted* that *powerfull* meanes of *grace*, ſo long vouchſafed unto them, therefore they

were by God's juſt puniſhment deprived of thoſe meanes (that ſpoken to them *obſcurely* in *parables*, which was to others *plainely*, as the places in the Goſpell ſpecify) and ſo delivered up to *hardneſſe* of *heart*. For this reaſon or cauſe (ſo כִּי denotes) *becauſe their heart* was (in the preter tenſe, *was before*, not *is*, in the preſent) *waxen groſſe*, and *their eares were dull of hearing*, βαρέως ἤκουσαν in the *aoriſt*, they *had* for ſome indefinite time *been* ſo *ſlow* and *dull* in hearing, καὶ ἐκάμμυσαν, *their eyes had they cloſed, leſt they ſhould at any time ſee, or heare, or underſtand, or convert, and ſo God ſhould heale them*. That this is the meaning of that hard place (a proclaiming of *conſequent deſertion* from *God* upon their precedent *obdurating* their hearts againſt *God's meanes*, and not any *abſolute, antecedent, unprovoked* act of God's *hardning* of them) the manner of ſetting downe the place, both in Saint *Matthew*, and in the *Acts*, and the rendring it as a *reaſon* of *Chriſt's ſpeaking to them in parables*, in three other places, will inforce; as might be more largely here manifeſted, if it were ſeaſonable. And indeed (to returne from this ſhort digreſſion) the *promiſes* of the Goſpell goe generally on this ground, aſſurance of *grace to the humble*, that is, to thoſe that being *ſenſible* of their *danger* through ſin, doe obey God's *call*, and reſigne themſelves up as *Subjects* to *Chriſt*, but withall that threat adjoined of *reſiſting the proud* or diſobedient, *Ja.* 4. 6.

Sect. 6. And though it may be ſaid that God doth not alwayes *withdraw* his *Grace*, and his *cals* the *meanes* of *grace* upon every ſuch *reſiſtance* of ours, and therefore I may ſtill hope that he will continue them to me to the *houre of my death*, and then I may make uſe of them; yet the *anſwer* will be pregnant enough,

Sect. 7. 1. That although God upon every act of our *reſiſtance* doth not wholly withdraw *all grace*, yet we have reaſon to think that the oftner we *refuſe*, and reſiſt, the more apt God is to *forſake* and deſert us, and perhaps the *weaker* are his *after-cals*; As the *Angel of God* which he promiſed to *ſend* as a guardian *before Iſrael*, *Exod.* 23. 20. indued with the *power of God*, *v.* 21. was, ſay the learned *Jewes*, upon their *worſhipping the calfe*, taken away from them, and an inferiour weaker *Angel* given in his ſtead, with no more then meere *Angelical* power; and this they ground on *Exod.* 33. 3. where God, that *v.* 2. ſaith *he had promiſed to ſend*

him

his Angel before them, now tells them, *he will not goe up in the midst of them, for they are a ſtiffe-necked people*. And then ſure this will be able to inforce that *warning* of God's concerning that Angel, *Exod.* 23. 21. *Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not*; as being ſure that any ſuch *provocation* will bring ſome *revenge* or puniſhment after it. A gleame of which truth it was, that the Heathens conceived that their τοπικοὶ θεοὶ, the *Gods*, or *Angels* of *Cities* or *Nations*, did upon the *provocations* and *ſinnes* of the inhabiters ſolemnly forſake their Altars and Temples, reſigne up their care and tuition of them. 2dly. That every *act* of our preſent *reſiſtance* adds to our future *obduration*, as the beating of an hammer on an anvill (ſuch is the νοῦς ἀντίτυπος in *Theod.* the ſoule that reverberates every ſtroke or call) makes the anvill the *ſmoother*, and in effect the *harder*, I meane leſſe capable of impreſſion; and then in the *ordinary diſpenſation of the ſpirit*, though God ſhould continue the *ſame degree of grace*, after our frequent *reſiſtances* which he gave before; yet we ſhould then be leſſe likely to *receive it*, then we were before, when yet it appeares we did not *receive it*. Whether by *one* or *both* of theſe meanes it comes to paſſe, I know not; but ſure every ſuch *ſinne* that is thus added to the *tale*, makes the *reduction* of any ſinner more *difficult* and *improbable* then before it was; and I ſhall appeale to the *conſcience* of every ſuch man that hath for any time *flattered* himſelfe with the *hopes* of what a *Death-bed repentance* may do for him, whether he do not find that ever ſince he entertained thoſe *hopes*, he hath grown more *wretchleſſe, prophane, Atheiſticall*, and ſo much farther from the end he *hopes for, or depends on*, and every day in an eſtate more *deplorable*, and *deſperate*, then other.

3dly. That we have no *reaſon* of *beleeving*, or *hoping*, farther then we have grounds from the *word of God*, (the foundation of all beliefe and hope) and that either from ſome *promiſe*, or *example* there. *Sect.* 8.

And therefore the next thing I deſire ſhould be conſidered, is,

1 How farre thoſe *promiſes* and *examples* may be extended, and from thence that it be reſolved *unreaſonable* and *unſafe* to extend our *hopes* or *perſwaſions* of our ſelves any farther, then thoſe will make it *prudent* for us to extend them.

For the *promiſes*, that which is moſt familiar with us, and on *Sect.* 9.

which 'tis moſt likely moſt men take up this hope, is that, wherewith our *Common prayer-booke* begins, *At what time ſoever a ſinner doth repent him of his ſinnes &c.* of which (that we miſtake it not) theſe two things are obſervable.

1. That that place containes no *promiſe* of Gods giving the *grace of repentance at all times*, which is the only thing which all this time we conſider; but onely that *at all times* God is ready to *forgive* on ſuppoſition that we doe *repent*.

3 That that place cannot ſo fitly or probably be applyed to a *death-bed repentance*, becauſe if we look into the margent of our bookes we ſhall ſee the place cited from *Ezech.* 18. 21, 22. and therefore is in juſtice no farther to be extended, as an *infallible promiſe of Scripture*, then that in *Ezech.* will beare; and that upon examination will yeeld no more then this, *that at what time ſoever a wicked man ſhall convert to God, turning from all his ſinnes, that he hath committed*, and on the contrary live, and performe the actions of a new life, *keep all Gods Statutes*, that is, performe (*though not perfect, yet*) *ſincere, univerſall, impartiall* obedience, *and doe that which is lawfull and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not dye, his tranſgreſſions ſhall be forgiven; and in his righteouſneſſe*, his renewed ſincere obedience, *he ſhall live.* Which *doing*, and *keeping*, and *righteouſneſſe*, how it can be applyed to him which begins his worke not till he ſees that he is juſt ready to *dye*, will hardly be imaginable.

Sect. 10.

Qui promiſit pœnitenti veniam, non promiſit peccanti pœnitentiam.

But having ſaid thus much of this one Place, I remember the ſaying of an *ancient* (uncontradicted by any that I have heard of) that *though God promiſe pardon to all penitents at all times, yet he hath no where promiſed repentance to thoſe all at all times*, and that is all we now ſpeake of, & therefore ſhall now ſuppoſe there are no ſuch places, and therefore ſeeke no farther for them; and though without ſuch *promiſe* 'tis poſſible God may ſtill give that *grace* of *repentance*, yet that he ſhould do ſo;

1. It is *extraordinary*, and therefore he that deſpiſes his *preſent* offers, hath little *reaſon* to *hope* that thoſe *extraordinaries* ſhall be reſerv'd for him, and if ſtill he will *hope*, *Job* hath told him, *The hypocrites hope ſhall periſh*, and I ſhall be bold to adde, that there is no greater degree of *Hypocriſie*, then this *want of ſincerity*, which appeares now in him by his *not accepting of grace* for the *preſent*,

preſent, by *refuſing* or *deferring* to do that which he is *enabled* and *ſollicited* to do.

In ſtead of ſeeking after more ſuch *promiſes* I ſhall adde one terrible *threatning*, *Pſal.* 95. which is repeated by Saint *Paul* in the *Epiſtle to the Hebrews*, and by our *Church* thought fit to begin our dayly morning *ſervice*. Where after theſe words *To day if you will heare his voice, harden not your hearts*, which ſignifies the time *preſent*, or at fartheſt the time of Gods *calling to them* in his word *to heare his voice*, 'tis ſtraight added to all others, *I have ſworne* (and Gods *oaths* are *irreverſible*) *in my wrath, that they ſhall not enter into my reſt*. To which theſe two other places may fitly be ſubjoyned, *Prov.* 1.26. where as the *puniſhment* of thoſe that have *refuſed* God's calls, 'tis added in God's name, *I will laugh at their Calamity, and mocke when their feare cometh*. A terrible place to him that hath neglected Gods *ſeaſons* and *opportunities*, and at laſt comes to be ſurpriz'd with *Death*, and the *feares* that accompany it, and then begins to fly to God for *ſuccour*, and *grace*, and *pardon*, & God in ſtead of *compaſſionating*, *ſcoffes*, & *laughs*, & *mocks*, at him; The leaſt that this can import, wil be that that time is a very *improbable* time for that moſt neceſſary work to be wrought by Chriſt in us. The other place is that admonitiō of the *author* to the *Hebrewes* 12.16,17. that no man be *prophane as Eſau was, in ſelling his birth-right for a morſell of meate. i.e.* (at leaſt by way of accommodation) that pretious *priviledge* and *birth-right* of *grace* here, and (conſequent to the *Chriſtian* uſe of that) his *eternall inheritance in Heaven*, for ſome *tranſitorie pleaſure of* this *earth*, leſt it befall him *eternally*, what befell *Eſau* here in reſpect of his *father's bleſſing*, *he found no place of repentance*, could not get his father *Iſaac* to *repent*, or reverſe the donation from *Jacob* to him, though he *cryed bitterly* for it, *Haſt thou but one bleſſing, O my father? bleſſe me, even me alſo, O my father*; and ſo, as it follows there, *ſought it carefully with teares*. The full importance of the place is, that they that are guilty of *Eſau's deſpight* and contempt, which is there called *prophaneneſſe*, may have reaſon to apprehend that they may fall into the ſame *hazard* for their *ſpiritual* eſtate, that *Eſau* did for his *temporall*, be *irreverſibly* loſt, and finde no place for *repentance* in *God*, though they *ſeeke* it with *ſorrow*, and *griefe*, and *bitter compunction, carefully with teares*. To which *Sect.* 11.

purpose *Christ's* dealing with the people of the *Jewes*, is matter of example, and admonition to every of us, *Luk.* 19. 42. when *weeping over* Hierusalem *he said, If thou hadst knowne, or O that thou, even thou didst know, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace*; and as if that time were past, just as he was a speaking, he adds, *But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the dayes shall come, &c.* It seemes before the point of the *comming of those dayes* of their surprizall, the *things belonging to their peace* were *hid from their eyes*, to wit, upon that criticall fatall act of their crucifying Christ, adding that bloody *transcendent* impiety to their former *killing*, and *stoning* of the *Prophets*, on which certaine *irreversible* destruction went out against them; In which case *though Noah, Daniel*, and *Job should intercede*, they should not be able to *reverse it*.

Sect. 12. To which purpose 'tis observed generally by *Divines* from these, and the like grounds, that there is to every wicked man a time when the *measure of his iniquities are filled up*, and Gods patience in waiting for him so wearied out, that he gives over *calling*, or *expecting*, or *waiting* his *repentance*. This was wont to to be called by the *Jewes the measure of judgment*, *i.e.* a pitch of sin, upon which *judgment* infallibly followed, *destruction* of whole Kingdomes, and the like. This time is not to be *knowne* by any man of himselfe, (nor to be *discerned* by any *observation*, and *comparing* of himselfe with others) either by the *number of sinnes*, or *calls of God*, or *yeares* spent in sinne contrary to those *calls*, there being so much *variety* in these, and in God's dealing with men, that nothing but Gods *revelation* can give us any certaine *knowledge* in this point; Only this may be said of it, 1. That the *death* of an impenitent sinner, *i.e.* God's *plucking* him away in that state, is, when it comes, a certaine *indication* of it. 2. That it is *possible*, I say *possible*, that it may be before the time of death, *i.e.* that the man which is come to that *fulnesse of sin* and ripenesse for excision, may be *kept alive* by God beyond that time, and if that, which I say is *possible*, ever *actually* be, then is that man concluded under a *finall* sentence, an *irreversible* estate in evill, even in this life, and consequently 'tis *possible* some impenitent sinner may in *this life* arrive to that estate. For as *Numb.* 16. 38. the *censers* and the *lives* of *Corah* and his company were *forfeited* to God together, (as that

that place should be read, *the censers of these sinners with their soules, or lives, v.* 38. *are hallowed, v.* 37. *i. e. consecrated, forfeited to God,* their *goods* and their *lives* together) so is it with *grace,* the speciall *supellex* or *furniture* of the soule, that, and *life* are betray'd together, the same degree of *sin,* the same pitch of *provocation* makes *forfeiture* of both, and then God may use his *power* and *dominion,* as he please, *take both* together, or take *one* and reprieve the other for some time, *withdraw grace,* and leave life, for some *ends* in his *wisedome* seeming good to him; and as there the *censers* were not *destroyed,* but *made into broad plates for the Altar,* used to the *service* of *God,* when the *owners* were *swallowed up quick,* so no doubt on the other side, might the owners have been *kept* alive, & used by *God* some way to set out his *glory,* and yet the *censers* have beene *destroyed.* It being free to God to take the forfeiture, when, and how farre he please, and in case of such *filling up their measure,* either to *withdraw grace* only, (which if it be *totall* and *final* makes up the *irreversible* estate) or else if he so please, to call for both the *deposita* at once, take away *grace* and *life* together. בנפשתם

That I thus take confidence to conclude, is upon the *authority* of *Scripture,* which hath made it cleare to me that it was thus *actually* with *Pharaoh* at one time of his *life,* after the *sixth judgement* peculiarly (but not before, through all, or any part of the space of the former *calls,* much lesse at, or before his *birth,* or before Gods *messages* to him) when *God* is said *to harden his heart,* & *to make him stand,* or *keepe him alive,* (when otherwise he *had cut him off from the earth,* but that he intended thus to *reprieve* him) *that he might shew in him his power. Exod.* 9. 14, 15. Which because it is a *notable* (and as farre as I have observed in Scripture *a singular*) *example,* and because by some mistakes in our translation and by other *prejudices* it is become somewhat *obscure,* I will here set downe as it lyes in the story. *Sect.* 13.

Moses & *Aaron* are sent to *Pharaoh* with that message from God concerning the *dismission* of the *Israelites,* and with *miracles* and *signes* to give authority to their *message,* and *Pharaoh* refused to *harken* or obey, *but hardned his heart, Exod.* 7. 13. In which place our ordinary Translation hath mistaken, for it is not to be understood, as we read it, that *he, i. e. God* (as yet) *hardned* Pharaoh's *heart,* for the words do not beare that in the Hebrew, nor had any such thing *Sect.* 14.

thing by way of ſtory at that time beene intimated (only by way of prediction, and evidence of *Gods præſcience*, *Ex.* 3. 19. and by way of *Decree* what God would doe upon it, *c.* 4. 21. and 7. 3. which was *after* fulfilled, and not *yet*, and might therefore be referred to that *after-time*) (but ויחזק לב פרעה *Pharaohs heart waxed ſtrong, or hard, Was hardned*: and ſo it followes *v.* 14. *the Lord ſaid to Moſes, Pharaohs heart is hardned, he refuſeth, &c.* and ſo the very ſame words are rendred by our *Engliſh c.* 7. 22. and *c.* 8. 19. *Was hardned*, in the *paſſive*, not *actively he hardned*. And ſo this denotes only an act of *ſtubbornneſſe* in *Pharaoh*, an obſtinate reſiſtance or refuſall againſt God's *calls* and *miracles*, & not any act of *Gods* either *poſitive* or *privative* (by way of deſertion) in *hardning* him, only the *Lord had ſaid* that it would be ſo, (in the end of that verſe) which referres to *Gods* prediction of his *ſtubbornneſſe*, *c.* 3. 19. *I am ſure that the King of Egypt will not let you goe*; and that, I ſay, grounded only in Gods *præſcience*, which hath no more to doe with (no more *influence* on) the *effect*, nor degree of *cauſality* in the producing it, then my *ſeeing* of any *object*, hath on the *object*, being perfectly as *extrinſecall* and *accidentall* to the effect, as my *ſight* or my *knowledge* is to another mans *action*, and the thing *foreſeene* no more neceſſitated to be by that meanes, then it would if God did not *foreſee* it, it being common to God with us to worke by his will, and not by his *præſcience*, and the abſurdity being as great, to affirme that he willeth by his *knowledge*, as that he *knoweth* by his *Will*, or that I *ſee* with my *eare*, or *heare* with my *eye*, and ſuch like: the truth of which *Calvin* it ſeemes diſcerned by ſome hint in *Valla's* writings, and from him *Beza* learn't, and acknowledged it alſo. After this obduration of his againſt a *call* and a *wonder*, God proceeds to a judgement of *turning the water into blood*, *v.* 16, 17. and that it ſeemes was a very ſufficient meanes of conviction unto this *obdurate Pharaoh*, for ſo ſaith God, *Hitherto thou wouldſt not heare*, but *in this thou ſhalt know that I am the Lord, behold I will ſmite, &c.* this viſible judgment was able it ſeemes to extort from him the *acknowledgement* of the *hand* that ſent it, in *this thou ſhalt know*, and yet after this, it followes, that *Pharaoh's heart was hardned*, *v.* 22. *neither did he ſet his heart to this alſo v.* 23. and the reaſon is given, becauſe the *Magicians* did (in theſe two ſignes) *the ſame thing alſo by their inchantments*.

After

Vid. Inſtit. l. 3. *c.* 23. *num.* 6. *præſcientiâ ſolâ nullam neceſſitatem creaturis imponi libenter conceſſero, ſamet ſi non omnes aſſentiantur; ſunt enim qui ipſam cauſam rerum eſſe volunt. Verum acutiùs, & prudentiùs Valla, &c.*

After this comes the *plague of frogs*, and that it seemes came so neare him (*on him c.* 8.4. and *into the Kings Chamber*, saith the *Psalmist*) that, though the *Magicians* were able to do the like, yet being not able to deliver him from them again, he calls for *Moses*, and intreates his prayers for deliverance from this *plague*, and promises that he will *let the people goe*, *v.* 8. and *Moses*, to improve this mercy to him, that it may be a softning deliverance, that the *frogges* and the *obdurate heart* may depart together, bids him choose his time *when*, *v.* 9. and it shall be done for him, *v.* 10. *that thou mayst know that there is none like the Lord our God.* But it seemes this had no effect on him neither, for when *he saw there was respite*, when the judgement was removed, (now God's *mercy* was his temptation as before the *Magicians* inchantments) he *hardned his heart, and harkened not*, *v.* 15. and this was a third wilfull act of his owne obduration, agreeable to what God had foretold of him, *as the Lord had said.* Then comes the *plague of lice*, *v.* 17. and in this the *Magicians* are posed, *v.* 18. the Devill that before could *hurt* but not *deliver*, that could doe *destructive*, but not *saving miracles*, is not now able to *destroy*, to doe *mischiefe*, *confesses* and proclaimes the *finger of God*, as he doth the *Messias* in the *Gospell*, when the *Pharisees* denied him, and yet for all this, this *testimony* and *sermon* of the very *Devill* against him, it followes, *his heart was hardened*, *v.* 19. and *he harkened not as the Lord had said.*

Sect. 15.

θεοῦ μακροθυμία αἰτία σκληροκαρδίας. *Basil. l.* εἰ θεὸς αἴτ: κακοῦ.

After this comes the *swarme of flyes*, & that not only as a plague miraculously produced, but with a signe, *v.* 23. a *division* betwixt God's people and his, *no flyes swarming in Goshen*, but in all *Egypt besides*, on purpose to make him sensible of his sin by the *particularity* of the *punishment*, *to the end that he might know*, *v.* 22. on purpose to *teach* him *piety*. By this it seemes *Pharaoh* is wrought on a little, first to give *leave* that they shall *sacrifice* to God without *going out of the land*; then when that would not serve (because by so doing they should *sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord before their eyes*, *v.* 26. *i.e.* those things which the *Egyptians* would detest to see so used, *Gen.* 43.32. to wit in *Manetho's phrase*, τὰ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ θεμιστευόμενα ζῶα, *cattell* wch *were sacred among the Egyptians*, first by law forbidden to be *killed*, & after, though not then, received into the nũber of their *Gods*, for so was *Apis* saith * *Taritus*, a *bull* and the speciall God of the *Egyptians*) he proceeds farther

Sect. 16.

* *Caeso ariete in contumeliam Ammonis. Bos quoque immolatur quem Aegyptii Apim cotunt.*

ther and giveth way that they *may goe into the wilderne ſſe, only you ſhall not goe very farre away*, v. 28. and upon this promiſe, *Moſes* promiſes to *intreate* for him, v. 29. But now *Pharaoh* had already *hardned his heart foure times*, & at one of thoſe times he had over and above *dealt falſely*, promiſed faire, c. 8, 8. but brake his *promiſe*, and therefore now *Moſes* after this fift judgment, though he *promiſe* to *pray* upon his *promiſe* to *mend*, yet doth it with a particular *warning* more then at any time before; *but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more*, v. 29. as ominating that, if he bid, now the danger would be greater then ever before, and yet v. 32. as ſoone as the judgement was removed, *Pharaoh hardned his heart*, כבד הזות *hac vice*, this turn, *this time alſo*.

Sect. 17. Upon this God ſends that *plague of murrain* upon all the *cattle of Egypt*, c. 9, 6. and the heart of *Pharaoh was hardned*, 7. and ſo ſtill all this while though *Pharaoh* was *obdurate*, yet this by no act of *God's*, but *Pharaoh hardens his owne heart*, and *will not let Iſrael goe, as the Lord commanded*. Upon this God ſends another judgement, that of *boiles* and *blaines*, v. 10. and then 'tis ſaid in a new ſtile ויהוה יהוה the *Lord hardned the heart of Pharaoh*, v. 12. (which ſure was the time at firſt referred to by God by way of prediction to *Moſes* c. 4. 21. as our margent directs, and was the judgement before threatned implicitely in that *ſpeciall caution* or *warning*, c. 8, 29.) and this God never did till then; and therefore as after that *warning* 'tis ſaid that *Pharaoh hardned* his heart this time alſo, ſo 'tis here ſaid, v. 14. that כבד הזות this *turne*, this *time*, *now*, though not *before*, *God* would *powre all his plagues upon his heart*, and thoſe *plagues on his heart* are ſure *effects* of Gods *obdurating*.

Sect. 18. Upon which immediately follows the paſſage wherin the greateſt difficulty lyes, c. 9, 14, 15. not as we read it [*for now I will ſtretch out my hand, that I may ſmite thee and thy people with peſtilence*, for the event proves there was no ſuch matter, *Pharaoh* was not *ſmitten by the peſtilence, nor cut off from the earth by* that meanes, but drowned *in the red ſea* ſome time after. But thus ſhould the words be rendred, *And* (or *For*) *now I had ſent or ſtretcht out my hand, and I had ſmitten thee and thy people by thee peſtilence, and thou hadſt beene cut off from the earth*. It is שלחתי in the preter tence, *ſent*, ſaith *Ainſworth*, or rather *had ſent*, (as 'tis ordinary in *Hebrew* for the *preter tence* to beare the ſenſe of the *plusperfect* tence) and

and *Paulus Fagius* from the *Chaldee Paraphraſe, nunc prope erat coram me ut dimiſſem, I was neare ſtretching out my hand*, referring as 'tis probable to the plague of the *murrain*, in the beginning of the Chapter, (called דבר both in this verſe, and that *v.* 3.) which might have ſeized upon him and *his people*, as it did on *his cattell*, or elſe to thoſe *boiles*, *v.* 11. which might be *plague-ſwellings*, and ſo proper enough to *have cut him off*; and ſo that which followes will be more cleare, *But* (not And) *in very deed for this cauſe*, העמדתיך *I have* (not [*raiſed thee up*] but) *made thee ſtand, kept thee alive, ſuſtentavi te* ſaith the ancient *Latine*, ſuſtained thee, (for otherwiſe had it not beene for this, *I had ſmitten thee with the murrain or plague* before, *and thou hadſt* ſome time ſince *beene cut off* utterly, but that I intended) *to ſhew, or make known, or make to be ſeene* (for ſo תראתך literally ſignifies) *my power* in thee, as in cutting up or anatomizing a man *alive*, which is condemned to death, (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) that others may be inſtructed and benefited by that diſſection.

In this matter 'tis true Saint *Paul* reades εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐξήγειρά σε *for this very thing I raiſed thee up*, ſay we; but that muſt be underſtood and interpreted by what we have already found to be the meaning of the ſtory, and not on the other ſide this rendring of the paſſage in the ſtory (which the context inforceth, and *P. Fagius*, and out of him *Ainſworth* acknowledge to be the importance of the Hebrew) brought to the ſound of our Engliſh phraſe in Saint *Paul*, for ἐξήγειρα muſt not needs referre to the time of *Pharaoh's* birth, or to any *abſolute deſtination* of his *perſon*, (it would be hard to bring any *example* of ſuch a ſenſe of it in *Scripture*, or other Author) but may belong to ſome particular paſſage or part of his life, and ſo directly to this point of time, when God ſaies he might have *ſlaine* him with *plague* or *murrain*; and ſo be rendred *raiſing*, as that ſignifies a *raiſing* one, out of a danger or ſickeneſſe, a *reſcuing* or *recovering* him, and ſo *keeping alive*, as 'tis ordinarily uſed in Scripture of *raiſing* from *ſickeneſſe or death*. The ſenſe certainly is, that God *continued him alive*, when he had *filled up* his *meaſure* of obduration, and ſo in ordinary courſe was to be *cut off* by death; in the ſame manner as the *author* of the booke of *Wiſdome* ſaith of *God's* dealing with the *Canaanites*, *c.* 12. 20. *Thoſe who are due to death thou puniſhedſt with ſo much long animity*, and ſo it's intimated by that which follows, *Rom.* 9. 22. *God willing*

Tom. 5. *p.* 782.

Sect. 19.

Rom. 9.

ling to ſhew his wrath, &c. endured with much long ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction.

Sect. 20. And then when *Pharaoh's heart* was thus *hardned by God* in this *extraordinary manner*, God expoſtulates with him, *v.* 17. (in *triumph* as it were over this ſinner that now is the *illuſtrious* object of his *judgements* of *obduration*, *plague of heart*, & a kind of hell on earth, for which he was *reſerv'd*, beyond the ordinary period of life, *kept alive* for this remarkeable judgement) as yet *exalteſt thou thy ſelfe*, *&c.* and in referrence peculiarly to that *expoſtulation* is that objection to be underſtood, *Rom.* 9. 19. διὰ τί ἔτι μέμφεται; *why doth he yet find fault?* i.e. God might indeed, ſaith the objector, with good reaſon *finde fault* all the while of the former ſix judgements, when *Pharaoh hardned his owne heart*; but now when *God hath hardned him*, and by a totall deprivation of grace (without which he cannot chooſe but ſinne) *ingulfed* him in an *irreverſible* ſtate, as much as if he were in *hell*, διὰ τί ἔτι, why *yet* or *ſtill* doth *he find fault*, or expoſtulate? *for who hath reſiſted his will?* then *God* might be ſaid to *will* his *obduration*, which he had inflicted by way of *puniſhment*, (though before 'tis confeſt he could not) and *what* poſſible *reſiſting of his will* is there, that he ſhould *ſtill find fault?* The anſwer to this objection (firſt by way of ἔνστασις, not for any *exact determining* or *ſtating* any point of *controverſie* or *queſtion*, particularly of that immediately precedent, [*who hath reſiſted his will?*] but for the *puzling* and *ſilencing* of the objecter, *v.* 20. 21. and then by ſpeaking *directly* to the matter in hand about *Pharaoh*, *v.* 22.) might out of Saint *Chryſoſtome* be fully cleared, if this were not already too large an overgrowne πάρεργον, and this part of it impertinent wholly to the matter in hand.

ὃ περὶ ἀκριβείαν τῶν ζητουμένων, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀναπάντησιν, *Chryſ.* t. 5. q. 778. & againe, περὶς ἔνστασιν (*a figure of depelling the intention, or avoiding the bate of the objection*) ὃ περὶς ἀκρίβειαν δόγματος. *Sect.* 21.

The reſult of all that I have laboured to lay downe concerning *Pharaoh* is this, that although his ſtate were a long time but *reverſibly ill*, as long as he *hardned his owne heart*, yet when his owne *obdurations* were come to the *fulneſſe* of *meaſure*, and he *ripe* and dropping into *hell*, as after the *ſixth judgement* he was, then God *exchanged* the *firſt part* of that due puniſhment of his in another world, that was inſtantly to have commenced, for a *temporary cooler hell here*, *hardned his heart*, and obſtructed all poſſibility of *repentance* from him, and ſo concluded him in this life in an *irreverſible eſtate*.

Sect. 22. Having gone thus farre, I ſhall now demand, whether an impe-

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nitent Christian, that in the midst of many meanes of grace, many cals of Christ for many yeares together afforded, doth repeate and reiterate his *resistances*, and *hardens* so oft his *owne heart against God*, be not as great a *provoker* as *Pharaoh* was? I am sure, that that which *Josephus* makes the character of *Pharaoh*, ἀφροσύνη μὲν πονηρίας καὶ κακίας, *Folly with wickednesse and malignity*, is the just inscription of such for the most part. And if it be objected, that such an one is not allowed those signes and prodigies that he was, I answer, 1. that tis but the greater *mercy* to him, that he is not, those being all *destructive miracles*; and if he complaine for want of them he may within a while (if he have not already) meet with some *rouzing* judgement, some sharpe disease of the *stone*, or *strangury*, or *feaver*, a *thunder* and *lightning* about his eares, which will be able to supply that place, and *aggravate* his guilt, perfectly as high as *Pharaoh's*, if he be not reformed; 2. *Father Abraham's* answer to *Dives* may be *conviction* to him, that he that *hath the Moses and Prophets* in the *Christian* sense, the many *methods* of the *Holy Ghost*, the many *cals of Christ* in the *Church*, and is not wrought on by them, *neither would that man repent*, though al *Pharaoh's* miracles were shewed before him; some *magician-inchanting*-deceit, (flattery of his owne corrupt heart) or *comfortable hope*, which the removall of a punishment would be apt to infuse into him, would be as sure *divertisements* to avoid the force of the most powerfull worke of *Gods* upon him, as the like were then unto *Pharaoh*.

'Tis true there may be some disparity (in regard of some circumstances) betwixt that *Pharaoh* and the *Christian impenitent*, and therefore there will be no certainty deducible from *Pharaoh's example*, that any man now a dayes doth come in this life to that *irreversible estate*; This I am most willing to graunt, and fromthence to conclude, that *'twill be a great madnesse for any melancholy hypocondriack from this discourse to take occasion to pahnsy himselfe actually in that estate, and from thence to give over all hope, and labour to get out againe.* 1. Because the doing so is the sure way to *ingulfe* him in it for the future, though he be not yet in it, which is one peece of *fury*, thus to *run* into that, which I *feare*, when the *feare* ought in any reason to drive me from it. 2. Because this paper hath only laboured to prove that a man *may fall* into it, if he doe not take heed, which if it be *beleeved* and made *use* of, *Sect.* 23.

he never shall fall into it; and to give over all *heed* in a use quite contrary to this *doctrine*. 3. Because the only *reasonable*, and the farre more proper use of this doctrine will bee, 1. To *hasten* our *repentance*. 2. If it have beene deferred too long, then to helpe to *repaire* that defect by more zeale and *intention*, and *vehement desire*, by more *humiliation* to *root* it deepe, and by fruits (all that are possible) to *evidence* the *sincerity* of it, and in all these respects to *lose* no time in impious or *melancholy* thoughts, but by a speedy change to confute our feares, and shew that we are not lost irreversibly. 4. Because whosoever is supposed to be subject to these discouraging thoughts, and so in danger to be hurt by this doctrine, is supposed for the present to be desirous to repent and amend, and then by a *principle* laid in another *discourse*, we must suppose his present estate, though it be ill, yet not to be *irreversible*, this care and desire to get out being a character and indicium of that state of *sinne*, which is styled *sinne not unto death*, for which the *prayers* of others, *viz.* of the *Church* have that promise, 1 *Joh.* 5. that God will in answer to them *give him life*, *i.e.* not present *pardon* or *salvation*, continuing as he is, but sufficient *means* of *grace* to bring him to *repentance* first, and then to life. But if he have cast of all *desire* of being better, then as I have no such grounds of comfort for him, so will not the principles of *discomfort*, that this discourse hath offered, prove matter of *despaire* to him, but rather of rouzing and wakening him out of his *presumption*. This one answer is alone aboundantly sufficient in this matter, and then for any man thus to give over the *former* only *hope* (not upon any *appearance*, or *probable* argument, but upon a *phansie* or *jealousie* of his owne, raised only on some *occasion* or *pretence*, I am sure not *ground*, or *cause* taken from this *Discourse*) will be so unreasonable (and withall so *impossible* to *cleare* or *rescue* any the truest and *wholesomest discourse* from such accidentall *mistakes*, and *scandals*, *and inconsequent conclusions*) that I shall not adde any more words to *prevent*, or *cure* it.

Of Conscience,

The truth is, there is another kinde of *desperation*, that *of going on still in our wickednesse* (as *Jer.* 2, 25. [*thou sayest there is no hope*] is set to signifie, saith *Grotius*, *abstinere nequeo*, *I cannot abstaine*, and that impotence an effect of a *passionate will*, or a *custome* in sinning, as followes in that verse, *I have loved strangers, and after them will I goe*) the *running headlong* upon all the sinne, and dan-

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ger, and misery in the world, which we are wont to call a *desperate state*, because it is the neglecting of the *condition*, upon which all the *Gospell promises* (the onely ground of *hope*) are made over to us; and to *fortifie* us against that, is the only designe, and project of this paper. I wish it may prove *successfull* to it.

All which being not only granted, but proposed as *necessary* considerations to be taken along with this doctrine, it remaines still cleare and *uncontrolled*, that God may, if he will, thus punish a *hard* heart with *totall* and *finall substraction* of *grace*, and so with *hardning irreversibly*, either here, (which I only say he may, but know not that he will) or at the hower of death, at which time there is no doubt but *he will* thus proceed with every *impenitent*. And though it be *hard*, if not *impossible*, to judge, when the former of these times is come, or before-hand to divine when the *latter* or *former will come*, either to another or to my selfe, and so still there is *hope*, to him that will make *use of hope to present amendment*, not to *secure procrastination*, yet these three things may be resolved on. *Sect.* 24.

1. That there is or may be such a *time*, as to *nations* and people, so to *particular sinners* also. In the 10th *generation* the deluge came upon the *old World*, and in the 10th *generation* after that, the *fire* and *brimstone* came upon *Sodome*, and nothing but *repentance* could then have reprived them, or put off their ruine; To that end 120 yeares warning was given to the former, and *Noah designed a preacher of that repentance*; and to the latter, the Chaldee reades, that *God came downe to see*, whether they *had made to cease*, or made an end (so paraphrasing שוי כלה) *i.e. repented*, *Gen.* 18. 21. *& if not, I know*, *saith he*, what I will doe; Irreversible destruction in that case. And our Saviours parable of the *Tree* that for so many yeares deceived the owners *expectation*, is to the same purpose, and the issue of it, *Cast it down, why cumbreth it the ground?* Secondly, that every day spent in an unreformed state, brings a man nearer to one of these periods of *obduration*, or excision irreversible, as every of those *generations* continuing unreformed, came nearer to that 10th and last *generation*. Thirdly, that every call of Gods being *rejected*, brings him yet nearer to it, as every step in the way brings nearer to the journeies end. Fourthly, that an unreformed sinner, if he do (on *confidence* of longer space, and *resolution not* to begin that so necessary a worke of *reparation* till the *last*, but on

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the meane *to enjoy the pleaſures of ſinne, till the dayes come, that he ſhall ſay, I have no pleaſure in them*) *continue* ſo one minute longer, doth by ſuch preſumption terribly provoke God to bring that fatall puniſhment on him, and ſo, if he will goe on, may that next minute (for ought he knowes or any can enſure him) engulfe himſelfe in that *irreverſible eſtate*, out of which, when he is once in it, no *eſcape* or iſſue is to expected.

Sect. 25. And though after all this, one of Chriſt's parables ſeemes to allow as free a *reception*, and as faire an *hire* to the *labourer*, that *cometh lateſt into the vineyard*, as to any other, yet this is in caſe he be not *ſooner called*, but come as ſoone as he is, not when the *earlyer* call hath beene oft rejected, on purpoſe to avoide the *heat* and *burden of the day*; much leſſe when 'tis *therefore* rejected, becauſe it is too *early*, and becauſe the going in *later* will ſerve turne as well; for ſure God is not likely to be *circumvented*, and *cheated*, and *mockt*, by ſuch crafty *merchants* as theſe, nor to call ſuch at the *eleaventh howre* that would not come, at the 3d, nor 6t, nor 9th, nor to *admit*, or *reward* them that come in that manner, as they are likly to come with, (*i.e.* only a deſire of heaven) when the doors are *ſhut*, when they are not *called*. To which purpoſe his dealing with the *Iſraelites* is remarkable, God commanded them at his *bringing them out of Egypt* to *invade* the *Canaanites*, and promiſed them *ſtrength* to *overcome* them, and *poſſeſſe the land*, but they refuſed to *go up*; afterwards when he bid them not, they would *needes go up*, & then they *miſcarried* in the *attempt*; the application is *eaſie* and *terrible* to the *delayer*, or refuſer, and the *parable* of the *fooliſh Virgins* ſeemes to bring it home to our pupoſe, they come *knocking* when the *doore is ſhut*, and finde no *admiſſion*. *Mat.* 25. 11.

Sect. 26. And beſide the *deterrements* that may thus be offered us on *Gods* part in ths buſineſſe, many other are ready at hand from conſideration of *our ſelves*, as 1. that though God doe *continue to call*, yet we may be as likely to *deferre* ſtill, as before we were, and to thinke that other one act of *procraſtination* may be as ſafe, as the many former have beene. 2. That *leiſure*, *will*, or *ſtrength* may then be wanting, and then farre more probably then before, by how much a more chronicall habit doth harden the heart, weaken, and ſtop the eare, and many the like; and ſo ſtill nothing is ſafe, but *preſent inſtant returning*. The Prophets ſpeech is remarkeable to the confirmation and enforcing of this, *Eſa.* 55. 6. *Seeke the Lord*

Lord while he may be found (it seemes there is a period of that time, and so a time when he *may not be found*, ὅτε ἐσφράγισαι ταμεῖα, when the storehouses are sealed up, saith *Epiphan*:) *call yee upon him while he is neare. Let the wicked forsake and returne, &c.* an *actuall forsaking* and *returning* (sorrow for *losse* of *heaven*, or apprehension of instant *hell*, will not serve the turne) and then comes the promise that *God will have mercy*, &c. and so *Prov.* 8. 17. *Those that seeke me early shall finde me*, the promise is to the *early seekers*, and to no others, and so farre of the promises.

Then for any *example* in the word of God, on which to ground this hope, or make it prudent that a *future death-bed repentance* should be depended on, I thinke there is but one that will be pretended, that of the *thiefe upon the Crosse*; concerning which it is observable, *Sect.* 27.

1. That it appeares not of him, (nor have we any reason to charge it on him) that he ever *procrastinated* or purposely posted off his *conversion*, till this so late a date, and so he will not be matter of *comfort* to them that do.

2. That as farre as we have any knowledge, he seemes not ever to have heard of Christ, at least to have beene *called* or *instructed* by him, till he met him upon the *Crosse*, and consequently he can be no precedent to any that hath lived an *age* or a great part of it under the preaching of the *Gospell*.

3. That for the thiefe to be *converted* then, and *beleeve in Christ* in that state of greatest *humility*, upon the *Crosse*, (which so *scandaliz'd the Jewes*, when by all other motives they were inclined to have beleeved on him) was a most notable illustrious *eminent act of faith*, and ought in any reason to be preferr'd before that which is ordinarily found among men.

4. That it was accompanyed with as many *effects* of *sincere conversion*, as that condition was capable of, *confession* of Christ, and devout *prayer* to him for his *mercy*, or *remembrance* when he came to his Kingdome.

5. That it was not *extorted* by the *fear of death*, but proceeded from a sight, and acknowledgement of the *innocency*, and *power* of Christ, even upon the Crosse, and this was an argument to himselfe and others, (and was it seemes so acknowledged by *Christ*) of the sincerity of his *faith*, and *conversion* to God, and that being supposed *sincere*, will undoubtedly be *accepted*, be it never so *late*.

6. This was done by the *thiefe* in the midſt of all *temptations* to the contrary, the *Croſſe* one great *temptation*, and ſuch as almoſt all the Diſciples were ſhaken with, and beſides the other *thiefe* was his *tempter* to the contrary, *railing on* Chriſt, &c. *Luk.* 23.39, and alſo the *chiefe Prieſts, and Scribes, and Elders, mocked him, and they that paſſed by reviled him wagging their heads, Mat.* 27. and ſo that *new-convert-Thiefe* was a *ſingular* perſon, almoſt the only *confeſſour* in the company. Theſe particulars being obſerved will give us reaſon to acknowledge the *difference* great betwixt the example of the *thiefe*, and any that make *uſe* of that example to *deferre their repentance* till the laſt, and will conſequently *adverti ſe* us, that though it *ſucceeded* very *well* to him, it may *ſucceed* very *ill* to us.

Sect. 28. For other examples it will, I beleeve, be very hard to produce any out of Scripture (and for allegations out of humane *ſtory*, or obſervation, it will not be pertinent to produce them, becauſe they bring not with them any *evidence* how they were accepted by God, as that of the *thiefe* did, *This day thou ſhalt be with me in Paradiſe*) and yet to be ſure to omit nothing, that may to any ſeem pertinent, we will ſuppoſe the *converſion of* Saint *Paul* to have ſomewhat in it, ſomething like that of the *thiefe*, for he was *ſtrucken to the earth*, in the midſt of *his threatnings and ſlaughters againſt the Church*, and before he was recovered againe, undoubtedly converted, and after lived to be a moſt gracious *Apoſtle*. To which example as farre as can concerne our caſe in hand, I anſwer, by propoſing theſe three conſiderations.

Sect. 29. 1. Whether, ſuppoſing that *Saul* had *died* when he was thus *ſtricken*, (yea though it had been after the delivery of thoſe words, *v.* 6. [*he trembling and aſtoniſhed, ſaid, Lord what wilt thou have me to do?*] conceiving no more to be meant by them then was by Saint *Peter's* auditours, when they ſaid, *Men and brethren what ſhall we doe?* to which he there anſwers, *Repent, &c.* whether I ſay any man would affirme, that he had been ſaved (and yet ſure that *trembling* and *ſaying amounted* as farre as *ſorrow* for ſinne without actuall *amendment*) or at leaſt bring any *evidence* of Scripture to confirme any ſuch *affirmation*. If God's abſolute *decree*, that of *Electing of his perſon* be produced for ſuch argument, that will as much hold for the ſaving him, though he had died in the midſt of his *blaſphemies*, without any ſuch *trembling*

and then he might have been *saved*, without ever having been *converted*; which I have not yet heard to be asserted by any, unlesse the *Antinomian* doctrine may amount so farre.

2. Whether the case of Saint *Paul* be not quite distant from that of a *Christian*, *delaying* and deferring *repentance* to the last. For that is *sinne against light*, and so a wilfull, deliberate crime, and by that God is *provoked* to *with-draw*, rather then *invited* to *give more grace*. But Saint *Paul* affirmes of himselfe that he *obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly*, in *unbeliefe*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. and therefore though *ignorant* Christians, *zealous* in their *erroneous* way may be allowed some of our *charity*, upon this *precedent* of Saint *Paul's conversion*, and it may be agreeable to *analogy of faith*, to hope that God will by an *extraordinary* way bring them to a sight of their *errours* in time of life, or accept their *repentance* for all sinnes *knowne* and *unknowne*, (so there were in them a *preparation* of mind to have deposited their *errours* upon sufficient *light*, and to have reformed the sinnes consequent to those *errours*) yet that a bare *sorrow* shall be accepted for wilfull sinnes, when it is on purpose *deferred* so long, till it cannot *bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, and so in effect can prove nothing but *sorrow*, (no *amendment* being added to it actually; and whether the *resolution* of amendment be *sincere*, it is both to the party himselfe, and to others by ordinary meanes utterly *un-evident*, because he is supposed to dye before any *sufficient triall* of it) I conceive will not be thought concluded convincingly from that *example*. Sect. 30.

3. Whether the enlarging of *Sauls* life *and aboundant labouring* and *suffering* of his, after conversion, be not an intimation (very observable) that great sinners, when they are *converted*, must doe much more in *Christianity*, (I meane exercise more *acts* of *sorrow* and *repentance*, whether by way of *restitution* to those that are *wronged*, or of *satisfaction* to those that were *scandalized*, or to expresse the sincerity of the change by way of ἐκδίκησις, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. of *revenge* on himselfe) then would be necessary to the *salvation* of another: and if 'were so of Saint *Paul*, whose former sinnes were committed *ignorantly*, then how much more of *wilfull continuers* in sinne, as he, that thus *deferres* his *repentance*, is supposed to be? Sect. 31.

The *promises* and *examples* from Scripture being considered, and Sect. 32.

found unconcluding: the *fifth* thing to be considered, is, whether he that thus depends on a *death-bed repentance*, doe it not because that time will be more *probable* for him to *repent* in, then any other, and that though he *repent* not before that time, yet then it will be *probable*, which if he doe, then must he think it either, 1. in his owne *power* to *repent* without *grace*, and that is *Pelagianisme*, or 2. that *God's terrours*, and the imminency of approaching dangers have that or a greater force in them, then *Ordinary Grace*; which is quite contrary to the doctrine of *Father Abraham*, *Luk.* 16. 31. (*If they heare not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be perswaded though one rose from the dead*) & indeed to all Divinity, which asserts the *principall* or sole cause of true *saving repentance*, to be no *outward impellent* (for such were an *extorted*, not *voluntary*, nor consequently *true* repentance) but the *gift of sanctifying grace*, meeting with an *humble* malleable heart (supposing that *humility* to be first wrought by God's *preventing Grace*) in that sense that 'tis said, *God gives grace to the humble*. Or 3. that there is some *assurance* or *probability* that that *speciall grace* shall not then be wanting; For which yet we have shewed there is no *Assurance*; and for the *probabilities* which may induce *perswasion*, though not *assurance*, let us now consider,

Sect. 33. 1. Is it *probable*, that in this case God should give *more grace* then ever he gave before? Or

2. That the *same* or a lesse *measure* of *grace* then, should worke that which before it wrought not? Or

3. That that *performance* which would not have been accepted before, should then be *accepted*?

Sect. 34. For the first, the rule of Scripture is, *From him that hath not*, that is, hath not made use of *grace* given, *God will with-draw that which he had given*, and *Rev.* 22. 11. *He that is unjust let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy let him be filthy still*; and this not onely God *permitting*, but God *deserting*, and sometimes God *delivering* up, and possibly *obdurating* also.

Sect. 35. For the second, 'tis certaine that the longer a *habit* of impenitence in any sinne hath continued, the more obdurate the person is, especially if it have been sinne against *light*, (as our case supposes) and though it be not simply *impossible* to God to *melt* such, yet extreamely *improbable* it is, that they shall be *melted* without

a farre *greater degree* then that, by which before they were *not melted.* And though *sicknesse* it selfe may be a meanes of some force to worke good, and being added to that *grace*, which without it *prevailed* not, may now possibly *prevaile*, yet is this a great *uncertainty*. For, 1. Some men are worst under the *rod. Exod.6.9. They hearkned not for anguish of spirit and for cruell bondage*, their *anguish* kept them from *hearkning*. This *Hippocrates* observes, *de aqua, aere & locis*, and from thence hath a pretty heathenish argument, that a disease among the *Scythians* which he speakes of, was not θεῖόν τι, *of God's sending*, because it fell not on *poore men*, on whom he conceived the Gods would inflict all their evill things because of their murmuring and blaspheming. 2. They that are *affected* by the *rod*, doe not all *repent* sincerely, *Hos.7.14. They have not cryed unto me with their hearts, when they howled on their beds*; thus *Ahab's humiliation*, which the *judgement* produced, was we know no *thorough reformation*, onely a *putting on sackcloth*, and *going softly*, (not much of an higher pitch then what hath been related of an horse that by the help of a *hot floore* and some traces was taught to dance to a tune) and to that perhaps belongs that of the Psalmist, *God's enemies shall be found lyers unto him, submit themselves*, as our other translation reades, but *submit feignedly*, their love of God is but little improved, though there be an outward forme of *submission*, extorted it seemes even from *haters*; and so to this may belong that censure of Saint *Chrysostome*, (*l.* 2. περὶ ἱερωσ:) which he brings as an argument why men should be onely *perswaded*, not forced to reformation of any fault or errour, οὐ τοὺς ἀνάγκῃ τῆς κακίας ἀπεχομένους, ἀλλὰ τοὺς προαιρέσει στεφανοῦντος τῶν θεοῦ, *because God rewards not those that upon necessity abstaine from evill, but only those that voluntarily do it.* And it is observable in the ancient *canons*, that they that deferred their baptisme til they thought they should die, the *Clinici* or *bed-baptists*, had an ill character set upon them, and if they recovered, though they were acknowledged Christians, yet were excluded from any farther *dignity* in the *Church*; could never be admitted to *orders*, a marke of the *Churches* judgement of such men. Nay, 3. that which is then done by any man, there is no certaine *judgment* to be made, whether it be his *will* and intention, or no, whether it *come* from the *man*, or the *disease*. Tis a rule in *Justinian* that *surdus & mutus testamenta non facit*, there is small heed due to a *testament*

made by one that is brought so *low*: and sure *repentance* is a very easie taske, if he that is *disabled* for all things else is strong enough for that. 4. The great *diversions* which the sick bed presents would be considered; 1. *disquieting*, if not *enraging*, or *stupifying* paines; 2. *decay* of spirits, and a consequent *nummesse* and dulnesse; 3. the *hurry* of worldly *businesse* then to be composed and set in order; all which being put together will add extreamly to the *improbability* of any mans being *wrought* on, or melted at that time, and rather define that it is undoubtedly the *unfittest* and *unlikeliest* season to *begin* or *perfect* a worke so *great*, so *weighty*, that before he could find no leasure, even when time lay on his hands, to set about it; and yet farther, many diseases there are, a *Consumption* by name, wherein the more desperately we are *sicke*, and the nearer our *end*, the lesse are we apt to *beleeve* we are so, and other *sharper* diseases, when they come to an *height*, deprive us of our *wits*, and *hopes* together, and by their *indications* to others, that *they are mortall*, disable us utterly from preparing for that *mortality*.

Sect. 36. For the third there is little *hope* of that, the condition which is now required under the Gospell, being as *indispensably* required of all that come to *yeares* and *powers* and *meanes of knowledge*, as ever the condition of the *first Covenant* was under that; And that condition is, *Repent and beleeve the Gospell*; &, *Except you repent you shall all likewise perish*; now I hope 'twill be no newes to say, that *repentance* is more then *sorrow*; if it be, then observe 2 *Cor.* 7. 10. and it will be convincing. Besides, the example of *Judas*, that had this *sorrow* before he *hanged himselfe*, and the example of *Esau's birth-right* lost, and the insufficiency of *sorrow* at last to get *Isaac* to *repent*, or *reverse the blessing*, which God had *decreed* from him to *Jacob*, will argue that *bare sorrow* will not serve the turne to regaine the spirituall *inheritance*. Besides this *sorrow*, the most that that state is capable of, is a *resolution* of *amendment*, (as for *actuall amendment*, or the *evidencing* of that *resolution* by *actions*, this state is supposed uncapable of that.)

Sect. 37. Now concerning a *death-bed resolution of amendment* these 8 things may be observed, 1. That it is at that time most *improper* and out of season, very unreasonable that the *end* of the *life* should be the *first* minute of *living well*; It is an old rule in *Hesiod*, that 'tis *too late to sow* ἐπὶ ὀψίοις τεκμαῖς, *for then the corne should* be

be growing up; the *death-bed* is a ſpeciall ſeaſon for the *exerciſe* and evidence of many Chriſtian vertues, and conſequently very improper for a *ſeedes-time*, or *plantation*.

2. That it is a *ridiculous* thing, for a man to reſolve to *live* well upon no other conſideration, but becauſe the time is come when he thinkes he ſhall *dye*. The very *foundation* of the *reſolution* being contrary to the *performance* of it, the *condition* of all his good *life*, a *preſumption that* he ſhall not *live*. And not only *ridiculous*, but *null*; twill be but an act of *reaſon* & *juſtice* to himſelf, to *change* the *reſolution* when the *motives* are *changed*, and a contrary *imprudence* and *unkindneſſe* to adhere to the concluſion, when the *premiſes* are *confuted*, and to doe that which he *reſolved*, when that upon which the *reſolution* was made, (ſelfe-love and carnall advantages, and intereſts) ſhall as much *oblige* him to make contrary *reſolutions*; the *invitations* of the *fleſh* being as *perſwaſive* in *health*, as the *terrours* of *hell affrighting* in *ſickneſſe*, the preſent *pleaſure* now as ſtrong an *argument* as was then the approaching *paine*, eſpecially when the *pleaſure* hath the *advantage* of being repreſented *alone*, without the *rivall*; which was the only *meanes* by which the other came ever to prevaile. From ſuch grounds of diſcourſe as this, what can be expected of this *ſick reſolver*, but that he *reſume* his *ſinnes* with his *health*, leave his new *vowes* in that bed, where firſt he tooke them up, diſcharge his *feares*, and his *good motions*, his *Phyſitian* and *Confeſſor* together.

3. That a *deſire of dying well*, of having *heaven* in another world, may then eaſily be miſtaken for that reſolution.

4. That as a *wearineſſe of paines* may be taken for a *wearineſſe of this world*, ſo that *wearineſſe* may be taken for *mortification*, and that *mortification* for *reſolution of amendment*.

5. That the no *ſtrength* then to ſinne, may eaſily paſſe for this *reſolved amendment*; or however *reſolution* to amend at a time when I have no *ſtrength* to ſinne, may *laſt* no longer then that *impotence laſteth*.

6. That although this *reſolution*, if it be *ſincere*, (and ſuch as God ſees would bring forth *fruits* of *repentance*, if time were given) ſhall certainely be *accepted* by God, (according to that of *Wiſd.* 4. 7. *although the righteous be prevented with death, yet ſhall he be at reſt*) yet this *reſolution* while it is no more then ſo, firſt may be miſtaken and thought *ſincere*, when it is not, (there was little

difference

difference to any mans ſight, betwixt the *ſeed* that ſprung up without *root*, and that which was ſowed in *good ground*, till the ſhining of the Sunne made the *diſcrimination*) and that errour not only others, but our ſelves may be ſubject to; we commit many things in time of *temptation* which in abſence of the temptation we *reſolved* againſt, and really beleeved that *reſolution* had beene *ſincere*; & ſo we omit in like manner: and the reaſon is, becauſe we reſolved it only *abſolutely*, but foreſaw not the *price* to be laied down for it, either did not *diſcerne*, or elſe did not *reſolve* on the *paines* or *difficulties* that it would *coſt* us to performe it. He that is ſicke, and is aſſured that ſuch a *potion* will cure him, *reſolves* firmely he will take it, & is perhaps at that time perſwaded that this *reſolution* is *ſincere*, & yet when the *potion* comes, and proves extreme offenſive to the taſt, he will rather *dye* then ſwallow it; This argues the *reſolution* either not *largely* enough *extended*, or not *deepely* enough *radicated*; he had only digeſted the *potion*, as phyſick, but not as loathſome, as preſcribed for his *good*, but *foreſaw* not then (or after is not *courageous* enough to *overcome*) the *bitterneſſe* of it.

Sect. 38. And though I ſhall not affirme or conceive that every *reſolution* is *unſincere* which ever actually *failes*, or poſſibly *might* faile in time of *temptation* (becauſe thoſe *failings* may be but *infirmities*, and thoſe are *reconcileable* with *ſincerity*, or but *ſingle acts* of ſin, and thoſe if preſently retracted againe by *repentance*, and not continued, or *perſevered* in impenitently, are *reconcileable* alſo) yet ſtill ſure there is ſuch a thing as *unſincere reſolution*, and of the many kindes of that I ſhall name a few εἰς δεῖξιν. 1. The *reſolution* that doth not (or would not on ſuppoſition of tryall) *hold out* againſt the πειρασμοὶ ἀνθρώπινοι, the *ordinary humane temptations*, ſuch as are *proportioned* to the *ſtrength* which we *have*, or which, if we uſe the *meanes* preſcribed, we ſhall be ſure to *receive*. 2. The *reſolution* that is not *deepely rooted* in an *honeſt heart* (as that is expreſt firſt by the *good*, then by the *moyſt hoſpitable ſoyle*, contrary both to the *thorny* and *ſtony ground*, the one when the *cares of the world* are *unweeded*, *unmortified*, the other when the *hard heart* is *unſoftned*, *unhumbled*) 3. The *reſolution* that doth not *forecaſt* the meanes, as well as the end, the *difficulties* and *temptations*, as well as the *eaſier* and more amiable part of the *taske*: the man in the *parable* that ſets on *building* without *conſidering* the *charge*, without *laying or diſigning* the *meanes* whereby to goe

through

through with it, the *Herod* that *rejoyced* in *John Baptists light, i.e.* ſaith Saint *Auguſtine*, *beheld with joy the luſtre of his doctrine, heard him gladly*, and in obedience to him, did *many things*, but fell off, when he lookt upon himſelfe, and the *pleaſant ſinnes, the brothers wife*, that in *obedience* to him he was to *part* with; the *reſolution* that doth not extend to the *undertaking* the condition, the *unpleaſanter* part of the work, but onely layes hold on the *prize*, or the *duty abſtracted* from the *condition*, which is the *pleaſanter*, the *Balaams* wiſh for the *righteous mans death*, without any *reall change*, productive of a *righteous life*, or the young *Auguſtines* wiſh, that would be *chaſt*, but would not yet part with the *pleaſures* of *incontinence*, or the generall *humour* of the world, to like heaven as the place of *bliſſe*, and *piety* as the way to *Heaven*, but not to *mortifie* one *luſt* for the compaſſing of either. 4. The *reſolution* that proves *weake*, and *failing*, not for want of *ſtrength*, but of *courage*, not for want of the gift of *grace* on *Gods* part, but of *our making uſe* of this *grace* when 'tis given, or of thoſe *meanes* to which 'tis *promiſed*, (ſuch are that ſpirituall ἐλέησις of *prayer, humility, ardent importunate humble requeſts* to heaven.) 5. The *reſolution* that is not *univerſall* againſt all both *ſinnes*, and *temptations* to thoſe ſinnes, and thoſe not onely ſuch as now he findes *inclinations* to in time of *diſeaſe*, but alſo all other that in time of *health* may be moſt likely to *aſſault* and to winne him; And in a word, the *reſolution* which *God*, that ſees *unerringly*, ſees to be but *temporary*, or partiall, or *hypocriticall*, in any, or all theſe or any other reſpects; And then ſuch a reſolution as theſe (whatever it appeare to us who are not ſuch *infallible* judges of our ſelves, but whoſe *hearts are deceitfull above all things*) cannot have any *rationall*, or *Chriſtian ground* of *hope* (*meerely by* the good *hap* of being taken away before tryall, *i.e.* in effect, before this *hypocriſie* was *diſcovered*) to be *accepted* and *rewarded* by God; or if it have, it muſt not be by the ſecond *Covenant*, under which nothing but *ſincerity* hath that *promiſe*.

Secondly, ſuppoſing this *reſolution* to be *ſincere*, and ſo ſure to be accepted by *God*, yet there is no evidence to us that it is *ſincere*, or will be thus accepted, but by *worthy fruits of repentance*, by *enemies* and *temptations* wreſtled with, and *overcome*; from whence though it follow not, that God will not *accept* of that *reſolution*, (becauſe he may *ſee* it *ſincere* without thoſe *tryals*, which I con- *Sect.* 39.

ceive is the ground upon which the *Schooles* affirme that a ſtrong *contrition* may on the death-bed be accepted without *reſtitution*, &c. *i. e.* that in him, who hath no *time* and *ability* for any thing but *contrition*, God may ſee that *ſincerity* of *change*, which he will *accept*, becauſe he ſees it would bring forth *fruit* if it were allowed *time*) yet we our ſelves in this caſe cannot *know* it, and conſequently the *death-bed repentance*, if in any particular it prove to be ſuch as ſhall availe in *another* world, yet cannot afford the dying man any *comfort* or *rationall* aſſurance in this, nor conſequently his *friends* any thing but the judgement of *charity*, *which hopeth all things*, for which there is no evidence to the contrary.

Sect. 40. 7. Let it be conſidered whether any *example* can be brought in *Scripture* or *ſtory*, of any that wilfully and adviſedly *deferr'd preſent* repentance and *rely'd* and depended on *late death-bed repentance*, to whom it ſucceeded well. I profeſſe my ſelfe to have heard *terrible* ones to the contrary, but as yet none in favour of ſuch *deferrers*. Methinks the mention of *Felix* in the *Acts* 24. 25. hath ſome efficacy in it. He when (after ſome *preaching of Chriſt*, *v.* 22. *and knowledge of that way*) he heard Saint *Paul reaſoning of righteouſneſſe and continence* (things in which it appeareth by the text and by ſtory, by *Tacitus* and *Joſephus*, that *Felix* was much failing) did, as 'tis added, *tremble* and anſwer, *Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient ſeaſon I will call for thee.* This man upon *adviſe* and *deliberation* through the prevalency of his ſinnes which he loved dearely, *deferres* his repentance till a *convenienter ſeaſon*; And all that I obſerve is, that we never read of any ſuch *ſeaſon* that he made uſe of to this purpoſe.

Sect. 41. 8. Let it be conſidered, whether when the *laſt hand* of *God* comes on any man, (I meane that diſeaſe that cuts him off ſpeedily) if that man have remained *impenitent* till then, it be not a very *ominous* and *inauſpicious ſigne*, that that man hath *fill'd up the meaſure of his iniquities*, and now the *voice* be peculiarly gone out againſt him, as againſt the tree (even now mentioned) that had *fruſtrated God's* continuall expectation, [*Cut it downe, why cumbreth it the ground?*] If on the comming of a diſeaſe, (which like the *laying the axe to the root of the tree* is oft times an *hazning call* to repentance) this *uſe* be ſuddenly made of it, and God's *long ſuffering* do interpoſe in the *counter-voice*, *Nay but ſpare it one year longer, and if it beare fruit, well, but if not, then cut it downe*, and that

that voice be hearkned to, that is, if that *diſeaſe* doe not prove the laſt, but upon *reſolutions* of *new* living, the life be *enlarged* and the *reſolutions performed*; then 'tis very well; But if not, if it be (without more time of *repentance*) *cut downe*; if God's *long-ſuffering*, and *patience*, which was on purpoſe to *bring to repentance*, have been made uſe of (as it was ſaid of *God's long-ſuffering* to *Pharaoh*) *as a meanes to harden his heart*, have we not reaſon to *feare*, *that God's comming to ſtrike* is an argument of a *ſevere* purpoſe againſt that man? or have we any reaſon to *hope* that when his *patience* is at an end, his *mercy* and gift of *effectuall grace* is not at an end alſo? that which the *Apoſtle* ſaith *Heb.* 10.26,27.29.31. is much to this purpoſe. And I know not what will be called *falling into the hands of the living God*, if this be not, *viz.* to continue in ſin *impenitently til we fal into God's* attaching apprehending hands, of which the *doom* is there moſt *ſad*; *It is a fearefull thing ſo to fall.*

Having proceeded thus farre in *defining* (as *warily* and as *ſafely* as I could; by the conduct of God's word and Spirit) one thing may perhaps be neceſſary to be added, though not by way of *anſwer* to the poſſible *exceptions* and *objections* of diſputers, becauſe the doing of that, I find, would lead into ſome more *nice* and leſſe *profitable ſpeculations*, and contribute little to the direction of *practice*, the onely aime of this paper, (and therefore what was thus *prepared* ſhall not here be *inſerted*) yet by way of neceſſary *ſatisfaction* to a practicall *queſtion*. And the queſtion is this, In caſe I be a *miniſter*, call'd to give *comfort* to ſuch an one, *viz.* an *habituall cuſtomary ſinner*, which were thus *ſurprized* by the *hand of God*, any *mortall diſeaſe* or wound, and were thus *caſt downe* with extreame *horrour of mind*, and from thence profeſſeth himſelfe *reſolved* that if God ſhall *ſpare* him, he will certainly *lead a new life*, whether I would not give that man *comfort* in that caſe, but ſuffer him to be *ſwallowed* up with *deſperation*. *Sect.* 42.

To this I *anſwer*, 1. by ſetting before our eyes an *example* of *God* himſelfe in a caſe not very diſtant from this propoſed, which may be matter of *direction* to any who ſhall be called to for *comfort* in this kind, *Judg.* 10.6. *The children of Iſrael did evill again in the ſight of the Lord, and ſerved Baalim and Aſhtaroth, &c. and forſooke the Lord and ſerved not him, v.* 6. *upon this Gods anger was hot againſt Iſrael*, and he brought a double *diſtreſſe* upon them, *v.*7,8,9: *and Iſrael was ſore diſtreſſed. And then v.*10. *the children of Iſrael* *Sect.* 43.

cryed unto the Lord, saying, Wee have sinned against thee, both because wee have forsaken God and also worship't Baalim. Here is that *confession* and *sense* of the provocations, which our case supposes, and that in time of the *sore distresse*, and so in that parallel also. And then God's returne to them is remarkeable, 1. An *expostulation* continued for three verses, to *aggravate* their *crime* and *ingratitude*, and the close an absolute *refusall*, a denying *present pardon* to these *consitents*, *Wherefore I will deliver you no more.* And then farther yet a bitter *reproach* and *sarcasme*, *v.* 14. *Goe and cry unto the Gods which yee have chosen, let them deliver you in the time of your Tribulation.* And then the story proceeds to tell us the good *use* and *effects* that this *severity* wrought upon them. And *the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned, do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee, deliver us only we pray thee this day, v.* 15. *And they put away the strange Gods from among them and served the Lord, v.* 16. their penitence is approved to God by their patience, and submission, and importunity, by present reformation, and contrary acts of piety; and then it follows, *his soule was grieved for the misery of Israel, i.e.* God ceased to afflict them, and on the other side prospered them to victory in the next Chapter. And then this dealing of Gods being examplary to us, as farre as the cases shall appear parallel, may passe for a generall or first answer. But then 2ly. and more distinctly to the question, I answer, that in this case the course I would *prescribe* to others, or *observe* my selfe, is this, according to this copy premised, not presently to make haste to apply *comfort* to that man (meaning by *comfort* words of pardon, or promise, or assurance, that his *sinnes*, in this state, shall certainly be *forgiven*) but to dispense my *comfort discreetly*, and so that I may lay a *foundation* on which he may more *safely build*, and I more *infallibly ascertaine comfort* to him; I mean by *preparing* him to a right *capacity* of it, by *encreasing* yet farther in his heart, and *rooting* as deepe as I can the *mourning* (which if sincere hath the *promise* of *comfort*, *Mat.* 5.) the *sorrow for sinne*, the *humiliation* and *indignation* at himselfe, the *vehement desire*, the *zeale*, the *revenge*, the all manner of *effects* of *Godly sorrow*, and indeed by doing my utmost in *perfecting* this so necessary worke in him; which if by the *helpe of God* it be done, and those *graces* deepely *rooted*, (through a consideration not onely of the *instant danger*, but detestable *uglynesse* of sinne, the *provocation* offered to

a moſt *gratious Father*, & moſt *mercifull Redeemer*, and *ſanctifying Spirit*, together with all the other *humbling* matter from the particular *ſinnes*, and *aggravating circumſtances* of them) it will then be that *Godly ſorrow* which the *Apoſtle* ſpeakes of, and that will (if God afford *ſpace*) bring forth that *repentance*, which conſiſts in a *ſincere change* and *reformation*, (called by the ſame Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 7. 10. μετάνοια ἀμεταμέλητος, or as ſome manuſcripts read, ἀμεταγόητος, i.e. as I conceive *a repentance*, a *change*, or *amendment*, *which will not be retracted* againe, a *laſting* or *durable reformation*) and then there is no *doubt*, but to him which is in this *eſtate*, *mercy* infallibly belongs; And to him I ſhall then haſten to *aſcertaine* it. And yet of this mercy if I through ſome *errour* or *neglect* of mine, ſhould not give him (nor he himſelfe through the greatneſſe of his *ſorrow*, the floud of teares in his eyes, otherwiſe finde) any *comfortable aſſurance*, yet is he by God's immoveable *promiſe* ſure (*certitudine objecti*, though not *ſubjecti*) to be partaker, and all that he loſes, by not being *aſſured* of it *here* by me, or by his owne ſpirit, is the *preſent comfort*, and *joy* of ſome few minutes, which will ſoone be repaired, and made up to him at death, by God's *wiping off all teares from his eyes*, the gracious revelation of his Saviour-judge unto him, with a *Come thou bleſſed of my Father*, thou haſt *cordially mourned* and *converted*, and thou ſhalt be *comforted*. Whereas if I ſhould goe about too *haſtily* and *prepoſterouſly* to grant him any ſuch *comfortable aſſurance* that he were already *accepted*, (I meane not now that he ſhould be *accepted*, if his *change* be *ſincere*, or his *ſorrow* ſuch as would bring forth that *change*, for that *conditionall comfort* I have all this while allowed him, but *poſitive* aſſurance for the preſent upon a view of ſuch his *ſorrow*) I might then poſſibly raiſe him up too ſoone, before the worke were done, the plant rooted *deepe* enough, (and that were utterly to *ruine* him; by *giving him his good things*, his comfort *here*, to *deprive* him of it *eternally*) or at the beſt *refreſh* him a little here before-hand, but not at all *advantage* him toward another life; which *loſſe* being ſo unmercifully *great*, and *acquiſition* ſo unconſiderably *ſmall*, it were great *uncharitableneſſe* to runne that *hazard*, and ſo ſtill the beſt way muſt be by propoſall of *conditionall*, but not of *abſolute comfort*, to *humble him unto the duſt*, *if ſo be there may be hope*, to ſet him this only taske of *working out his ſalvation with fear & trembling*, laying hold on God's mercy in Chriſt, his *generall* but *conditionall*

An ancient one in *Magdalen* Colledge in *Oxford*.

ditionall mercy for all *penitent purifying* ſinners, (for *confeſſours*, and *forſakers*, and none elſe) and ſo labouring for that *ſorrow*, that *purity*, that *confeſſion*, *contrition*, and *forſaking*, and then *if he periſh*, *he periſheth*, no way is imaginable to doe good upon him, if this doe not.

Sect. 44. And if it be farther demanded, whether in this caſe ſuppoſed, I would upon his *demand* deny him *Abſolution*? I anſwer, that *Abſolution* may ſignify two things. 1. The *abſolution* of the *Church*, as it is the *Churches pardoning* him all offences done againſt *her*, *quantum in ipſâ eſt*, to wit, the *ſcandall* of his ſinnes, &c. and this *abſolution* the *Church* (and I, if ſhe have intruſted to me that power) ought to grant him *in articulo mortis*, when the *binding* him, or *retaining his* ſinnes is not probable to doe him any further *good*, by way of παιδεία, or *diſcipline*; In like manner, as every ſingle perſon *offended*, or injured by him, is by *charity* obliged upon his *demand* (though he be not confident that he is *ſincerely contrite*) to grant him his free *forgiveneſſe*; & the *denying* of this being thus *demanded*, were hurtful not to the *dying* man, but to him that were ſo *uncharitable* as to *deny* it; and the *giving* it an *obligation* of *charity* both to *him* and to my ſelfe: But for the ſecond thing ſignified by *abſolution*, *viz.* the *pronouncing him abſolv'd in heaven*, all that I am obliged to, by *duty* or in *prudence*, is then to doe it, when by examination of his *ſorrow* and *reſolutions*, I am inwardly perſwaded that his *repentance* is a well-*grounded* and *radicated repentance*; and in that as I would not perſwade any man to be over *eaſy*, or *popular*, (that humor of the *Emperour* now a dayes ſtolne into the *Confeſſor*, *neminem triſtem dimittere*) becauſe of the poſſible *hurt*, and unproportionable gaine of it; ſo if any man ſhould be over *auſtere*, and *difficult*, onely out of deſire to make the *penitent* yet more *penitent*, (and not to *bruiſe the broken reed*, to *tyrannize* over his *wounded* ſoule) to make *heaven* more *ſurely* his, by his being not yet *ſure* of *heaven*; this will be at the worſt but an *errour* of *charity*, which will never be imputed to the *confeſſour*, much leſſe to the *penitent*, it being acknowledged that the *Miniſters abſolution* doth not *availe*, *niſi clave non errante*, and conſequently that his *denying abſolution* (*clave errante* ſtill) will never doe any *hurt*; the *errour* of his *key* in *ſhutting* or *retaining* being in reaſon no more *mortiferous*, then the like *errour* in *remitting* is *ſalvificall*.

Sect. 45. Agreeable to this deciſion you ſhall finde the *practice* of the *Church*

Church anciently, when *eccleſiaſticall diſcipline* was in its *vigour*, In ſuch or ſuch caſes they would not afford the dying man *abſolution*, becauſe they had no grounds of *aſſurance*, that the ſtate of the perſon was *capable* of it, and yet would they make no ſcruple to allow him place of *comfort* and hope, that God might poſſibly abſolve him, God having other wayes of *diſcerning* the *ſincerity* of *repentance*, (*viz.* by ſeeing of the heart, or by conditionate preſcience) which they had not; and ſomuch for the ſatisfying of the queſtion.

All that I have now to add to this theme is only this, (which wil bring the whole diſcourſe home to the particularity of the *preſent eſtate of this Kingdome*, and ſo give you the *full end* of the writing of this diſcourſe) that by this long *debate*, and the evidence of the truth aſſerted, concerning the *ſoules of particular men*, the condition of this *poore* calamitous *Kingdome* is now *diſſected* alſo. We have enjoyed a long *day* of God's mercifull and gratious *calls* to *repentance*, and many ſolemne admonitions at the *doore* as it were of every *Church*, at the *beginning of our daily ſervice*, [*To day if you will heare his voice, harden not your hearts*] and it is moſt ſadly evident by our *preſent* puniſhments, that we have not *heard* the *voice* in that *day* of *peace* and *proſperity*, but *hardened the heart*; The *judgments* being now faln moſt *formidably* on the Land, and no part of it now remaining which hath not had its *ſympathy* in this *ſhaking*, *falling* fit, ſome *ſorrow*, and *humiliation*, and withall ſome acts perhaps of *confeſſion* have beene extorted from us; Were there to theſe an addition of that other part of *repentance*, that of a *ſincere change* & *thorough-reformation*, no doubt there would be mercy; God would *returne* upon our *returning*; Nay were the *reſolutions* of amendment, (which perhaps may be obſerved in many) *ſincere* reſolutions, ſuch as that *all-ſeeing* eye doth diſcerne, would hold out againſt all the *temptations* of peace againe, there were yet hope that for that *ſincere change* of thoſe *many*, the judgment (of the παλιγγενεσία at leaſt, that *finall totall exciſion*, that ſeemes to be threatned) might be reverſt, (according to the purport of the treaty that was about *Sodom*, betwixt *God* and *Abraham*) But by the *continuance* and no kind of *relaxation* of God's heavy hand, it is as cleare, as if *Euclid* had demonſtrated it, that yet that work is not done, that the *repentance* of the Land is but hypocriticall, ſuch as the preſent weight of the *judgements* hath

Sect. 46.

hath *extorted* from us, not such as would *continue* upon their *removall*, like the strange quicke sent that is reported of the wild boy of *Leige*, to have beene acquired by a thin Forest-diet, and to have been lost again assoon as he came to full feeding, (perhaps only a *sorrow* for the *smart* we are under) and this is such a repentance as would not be for the *honour* of God to reward with such a *donative*; The only course that a whole Synod and assembly of *Angels* could upon consultation advise us to, and *promise* it *prosperous* for the averting of ruine from the Land, is so to improve our *sorrow* above the *occasion* of it (the *afflictions* that are upon us) as that it may be a *sorrow for sinne*, purely for *sinne*, (for though *judgements* may be the *monitor* to put us in minde of those *sinnes*, and so the *occasion* of that *sorrow*, yet nothing but sin may be allowed the *cause* of *that sorrow*, or if it be, as soone as ever that be *removed*, the sorrow will be *superseded* also) and then that *sorrow bring forth* such a *change of mind* as would prove *immutable* upon God's allowing us a time of *respite*, bring *forth fruits of repentance worthy* of such *reprievall*. When the whole *heart* of this *Kingdome*, or of that part of it that still *cleaves* to the *house of David* is thus smitten, and really affected by God's rod, so that he to whose eyes all things are *naked*, γυμνά, as when the skin is pull'd off, and τετραχηλισμένα, *Heb.* 4.13. (as the *entrails* of a *sacrifice cut downe the back*, which the Priest doth μωμοσκοπεῖν, view it censoriously, and ἐξετάζειν εἰ ἐντελὲς, *examine* strictly, whether it be perfect, whether there be any *blemish* in it or no) may *pronounce* it ἄμωμον, a *blemishlesse* repentance, a *sincere hearty change*, then will there be a place for *hope*, assured *hope*, then may the *Priest* intercede with *confidence*, *Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach*; and the *hearer of prayers* will be obliged by that his title to *answer* that *importunity*. But till this *Rod* of the *Lord* be thus *Heard*, all hope in God for *mercy* to the Land, or for *victory*, (though to the justest cause that ever man espoused) will be little better then *Presumption*.

Lucian de sacrif:

If yee offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evill? and if yee offer the lame and sicke, is it not evill? Offer it now to the Governour, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the Lord of Hosts? Mal. 1.8.

Si tu sis securus, at ego non sum securus. Aug.

FINIS.

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